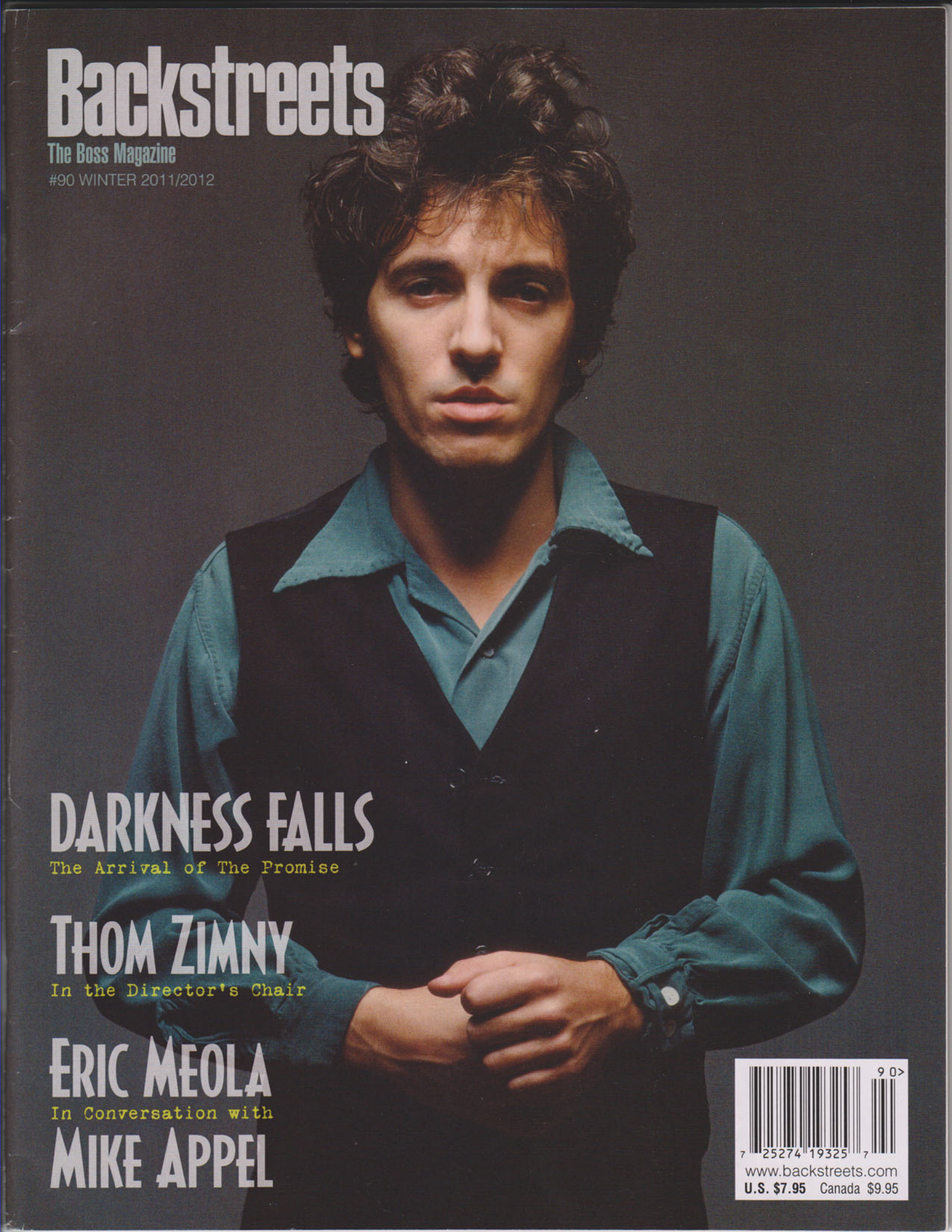
Backstreets

The Boss Magazine

#90 WINTER 2011/2012



DARKNESS FALLS

The Arrival of The Promise

THOM ZIMNY

In the Director's Chair

ERIC MEOLA

In Conversation with

MIKE APPEL

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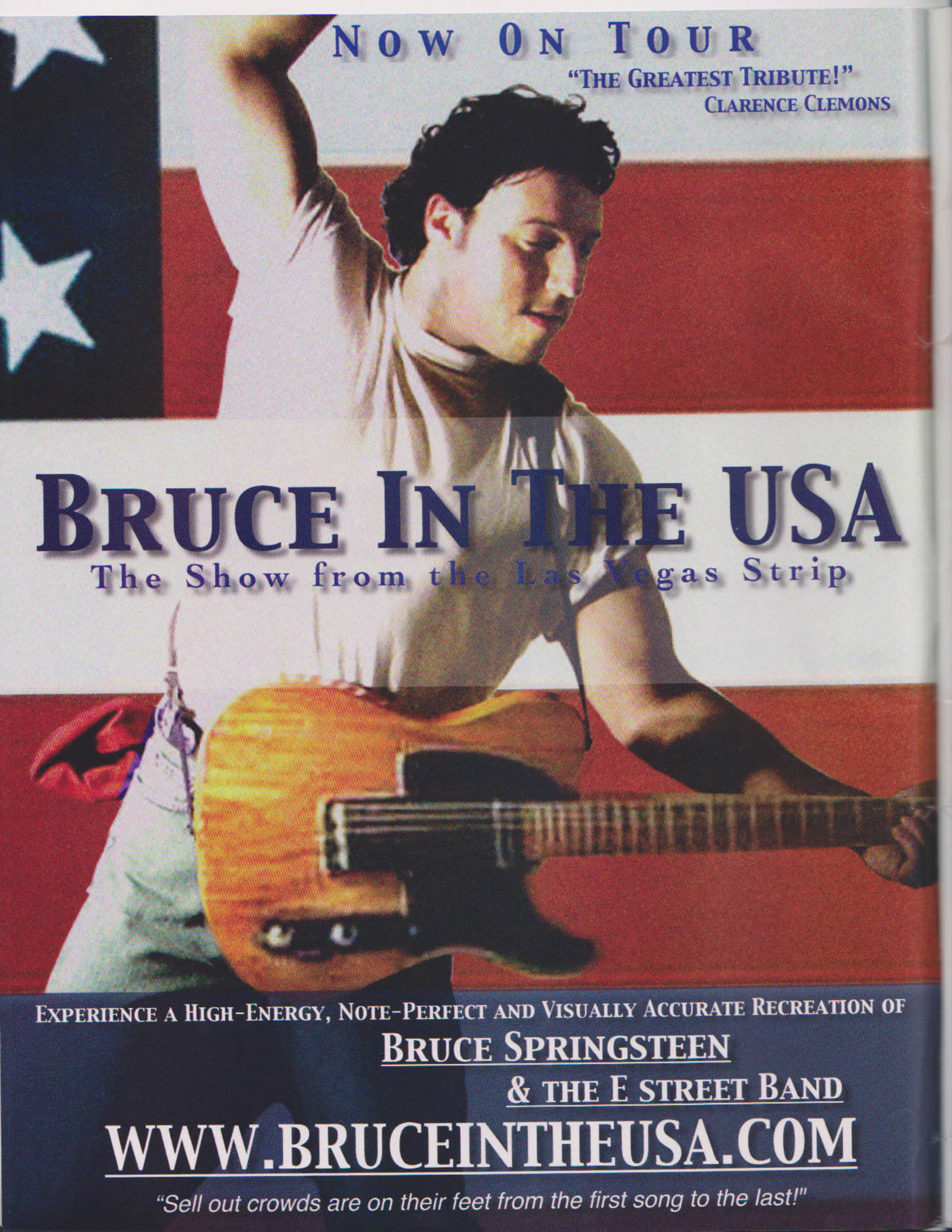
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Backstreets

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BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
circa 1977 · New York, NY
Eric Meola Photo

OFF THE WALL

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN & CLARENCE CLEMONS
June 20, 1975 · New York, NY
Eric Meola Photo

LETTERS

UNFORGETTABLE

Dear Editor:

I wanted to share one of my very favorite memories of Clarence Clemons.

My dad is possibly the biggest Springsteen fan you will ever find. He would follow Bruce and the E Street Band to the ends of the earth if he could. So naturally, that's the music that I have grown up listening to and loving, just like my dad. We've attended many concerts together over the years and have shared a great bonding experience over our love for Bruce and the E Street Band.

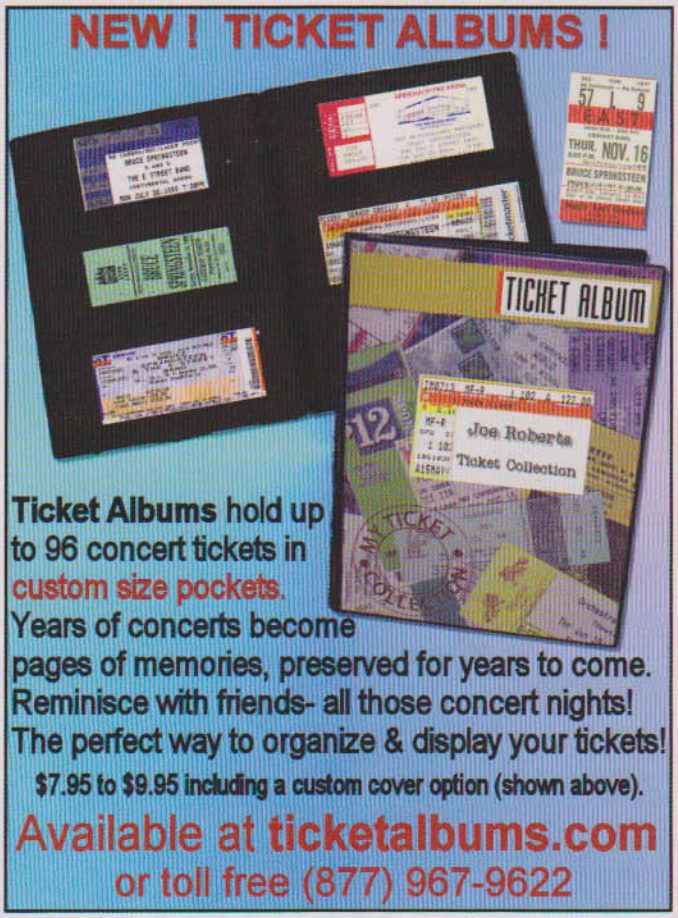
In April 2000, I was home from college for spring break and we had tickets to go to see the concert at Louisville's Freedom Hall. The show was amazing (as always), and afterward my dad said, "Let's go try to meet the band!" So even though it was late and we had over an hour drive back to Cincinnati, we waited outside with a few other fans in hopes of just getting a glimpse. Lucky for us, we got even more than we could have asked for. We had our picture taken with Stevie, Nils and finally, The Big Man.

It was an amazing moment for both my father and me, one that we will share forever. Clarence wrapped us both up in his arms as we snapped a picture, my dad and I over the moon because here he was: the Big Man himself!

My dad and I were heartbroken to learn of Clarence's passing, as many in the E Street Nation are. It just won't be the same without him, but Heaven will definitely be blessed with some wonderful sax.

Here is a picture of my father and I with Clarence after that concert—a moment that neither one of us will ever forget and were so blessed to have had.

Alisha (Murphy) Schweitzer
via e-mail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HEART OF GOLD

Dear Editor:

Back in the '80s, Clarence played a solo show with his band, the Red Bank Rockers, at Dooley's in Tempe, AZ. I went with a buddy of mine and his Mom who was visiting from Chicago. Clarence was playing two shows the same night, and we went to the early show. After the show, we went backstage and brought some of the photos that I had taken over the years at Springsteen concerts to see if Clarence would sign them. We caught him on the way to the tour bus. He was great and signed for all of us. When he saw my buddy's mom—who was about 70 years old then—he asked if we were staying for the second show. When we said that we hadn't gotten tickets, he insisted that we stay as his guests. During the second show he saw us up front and pulled my friend's mom on stage with him to serenade her. What a gentle soul with a heart of gold. He will be missed!

Dory Boese
Phoenix, AZ

FRIEND TO THE END

Dear Editor:

I read today about Clarence Clemons' passing. I find myself looking at the cover of *Born to Run* tonight, smiling at just how daring a statement it was in its day: the Boss leaning on his black sidekick sax man. What a celebration of friendship! And then I thought about how many of us Bruce has reminded of this particular value—friendship—for four decades running, and how much that has helped, at critical times. I find myself wondering: how is Bruce Springsteen sleeping tonight, knowing his friend is gone? Would it be any comfort to him to know that his open declarations of friendship have inspired thousands around the globe? Would it be any comfort to know that thousands of us fans are listening to that solo on "Jungleland" tonight, smiling through our tears? People come and go. Friendship itself remains. Thank you, Bruce and Clarence, for reminding us.

Jörn Severidt
Rovaniemi, Finland

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

Dear Editor:

I have been devastated since I heard the news of the death of Clarence Clemons. Fortunately, I did have an interesting experience meeting him several years ago. He was doing a signing for a solo record he had just released and was appearing at a bookstore on the Third Street Promenade in Santa Monica. It was very hot outside that day, but I had an idea for a picture with him that I thought would make a great Christmas card.

I waited patiently in line until I finally got to meet him. Naturally, he was bigger than life and all smiles. He was very gra-

cious when I asked him if I could take a picture with him. "Sure," he replied with a big old grin and stood up to pose with me. It was then that I whipped out my black leather jacket, which I had been carrying around in the heat all day. I don't think Clarence even got it at first, but the rest of the crowd sure did as they erupted in laughter.

I asked Clarence if we could do the *Born to Run* pose, and he was more than willing to accomodate me—once I reminded him on which side he was supposed to be standing. Clarence certainly made my Christmas that year! Rest in peace, Big Man.

Bill Normyle
via e-mail

MYTHICAL

Dear Editor:

Everything in life is about some sort of connection. Some are stronger than others, some are fleeting, others stay with you for a lifetime. For fans of the E Street Band there was always a special connection to Clarence. He was a mythical figure in human form, holding that always-gleaming saxophone... but even more bright was the ever-present smile. I was thinking about that the other day, and I remarked to a friend that I never saw Clarence without a grin.

Music pays a central role in my heart and my soul. It speaks volumes where I struggle for the right words. Clarence Clemons' music always takes me back to a certain place in my life. The joyfulness of "Sherry Darling" reminds of summers spent on the beach with my friends, with no cares except for the next party or next Bruce show. The loveliness of his solo on "I Wanna Marry You" was playing in my head when I met the love of my life outside The Park Bench. The agonizingly beautiful "Jungleland" can still haunt me and comfort me at the same time when I think about love lost and hope of its recapture. There are so many more that it is pointless to go on, but it must be said that they have made my journey so much more fulfilling.

In the winter of 1999, I flew to Fargo to see Bruce and the band because I had front-row seats. I was delayed flying in, and my luggage was lost. It was one of those trips that seemed like it was a mistake. I got to the concert still in my work clothes and was really annoyed. But then again, it was front row. My buddy and I were really starting to have a good time when he noticed that the E Street Band members were pointing at me.

Now, I tend to have a lot of energy at these shows, and I was probably the only one in business clothes at the University of North Dakota hockey arena. I had a beer and my eyeglasses on the stage, and Clarence picked them up, and with a Santa Claus-like smile he handed me the glasses and told me he didn't want to step on them. I was transformed immediately into a fourth-grade kid meeting a hero. At the end of the concert, Clarence and Max walked up to me, laughing, and Max handed me his drumsticks, telling me that I gave him a lot of energy that night.

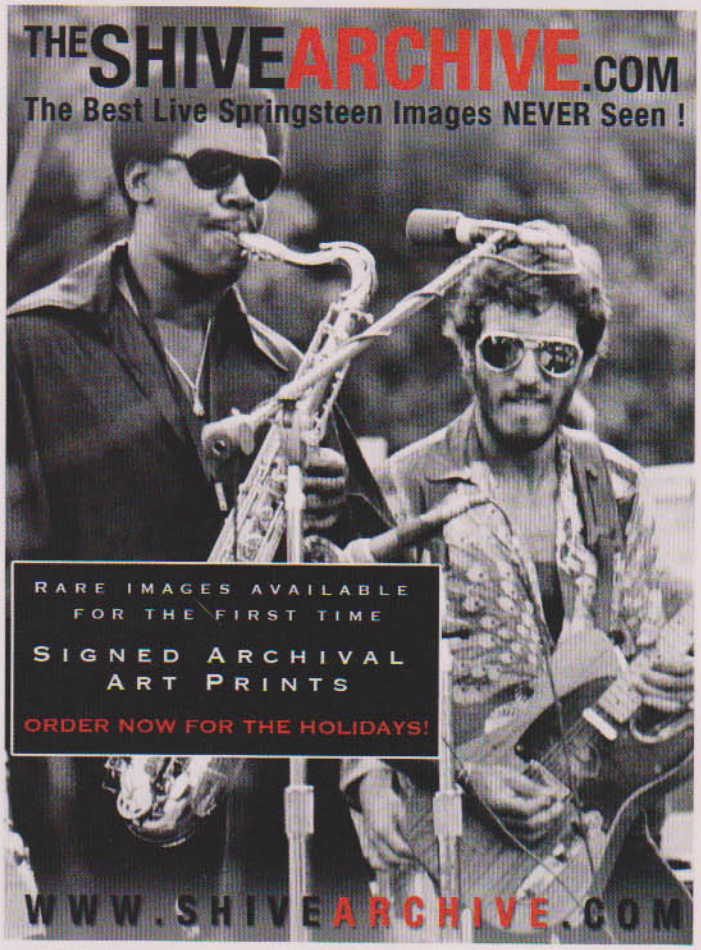
Well, Clarence Clemons has always given *me* a lot of energy, and so much more. Bruce Springsteen gave a stirring eulogy at The Big Man's funeral, a touching speech about not only his greatness but also his frailty, his weaknesses, and above all his humanity. I didn't know Clarence, so I have the luxury of seeing it in the light of a fan who was given nothing short of a lifetime supply of joy: the joy you can only feel at a concert or a ballgame when your heroes are fully on display for you.

Bruce Springsteen said that Clarence "is too fucking big to die" and that he will never truly be gone as long as the rest of the band is alive. I can assure Bruce that it will be a lot longer than that. The beauty of music is that it can never ever die, and it can take on new life through new fans and new generations. Because in this world of endless connections, the work, the smile, the beauty, the "magic and the ministry" of Clarence Clemons is eternal. Exactly as it should be.

Thanks, Big Man, for the memories and the dreams I still have.

You will always be the soundtrack.

Bud Confoy
Medford, NY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Something big was gone

Parting Words

By Christopher Phillips

When I was 13, in 1984, I made my girlfriend learn all the members of the E Street Band, their names and what instruments they played. *Made* is the right term, because while she was a good sport, she really didn't care. She kept getting Danny and Roy mixed up. But she played along—probably because she saw the slight frenzy in my eyes when I talked about Bruce and the band. When I later saw the movie *Diner*, I saw myself—not the most flattering mirror to hold up, but there it was: Eddie requiring his bride-to-be to pass a quiz, and Daniel Stern's Shrevie crying out to his wife over his records, *"This is important to me!"*

One name Girlfriend Past never had a problem with was Clarence Clemons.

That winter, I saw my first Springsteen concert. I remember spending a lot of the show poking myself to be conscious that Bruce Springsteen—the real guy—was right there on stage in front of me. I haven't really had that feeling since. Maybe it was just being a kid, or not having seen many shows in my life at that point, but I had to keep reminding myself that was *him*, here in this building, and he was nowhere else, and no one else in the world (outside of the Leon County Civic Center) was getting to see it. It was somehow a difficult concept to grasp. Bruce would later describe being in New Jersey as being "like Santa Claus at the North Pole... It's like you're a bit of a figment of a lot of other people's imaginations." That night it was like Santa Claus had come to Tallahassee, and I was literally having trouble believing my eyes.

Clarence, on the other hand, was most solidly *there*. I remember looking over to him during the show and being brought back to reality: this *is* happening. For all the mythologizing that goes along with the Legend of the Big Man, there was something about him that night—and on many nights afterward—that, for me, was undeniably real, present, and grounding.

Amidst the sadness when Clarence passed away some 27 years later, here was another thing to try to wrap my brain around: how something so solid, so real, so *there*... could be gone. When it comes to dealing with death that may not be an unusual question to grapple with, but in this case it feels particularly and appropriately *big*. I'm still not sure I completely comprehend it or have entirely accepted it. Sometimes it still feels entirely theoretical; in a way, I'm looking forward to the 2012 tour in order to be shown—to confront—what a Big Man-free world looks like. Because what else can we do now but celebrate his life, grieve his death, accept it, and move on?

But I catch myself when I talk about grief. Is that what I've been doing? Grieving? I've never been one to get too worked up over "celebrity deaths." Amid wailing and gnashing of teeth over Michael Jackson or Heath Ledger, callous or not, I tend to say at least to myself, "Yeah, but really, you didn't *know* him." I even reminded myself of that when Danny Federici died—that as hard as it might be for fans of the man and the music, it's a far cry from knowing, loving, living with or playing with the man himself.

And yet... I feel grief. Honest-to-goodness grief, and I felt it for Danny, too, and part of the challenge this time is making sense of it, even justifying it to myself. Part of it feels this way because, as Shrevie said, *"This is important to me!"* But it's more than that—it's more than having lost a component of this thing we love.

I've been thinking about the last time I saw Clarence, face-to-face. It was at the Greensboro Coliseum—a rare instance, for me, of getting to go backstage, so my heart was already pumping when the Big Man rode up to say hello. He was being driven on his... I don't know what else to call it but the Big Man-mobile, what most golf carts might dream of one day becoming. It might as well have been a throne. He was suddenly there before me, a beautiful woman by his side, a cigar in his hand, a fancy cane between his knees, and an enormous smile on his face. We shook hands, and mine was swallowed up. We made small talk for a minute or two, I don't remember what about, but I do remember his parting words.

"Have a good show, Big Man," I said. And as his cart motored away down the hall, he said, "You too, my brother."

"My brother." For something that really might not have meant anything at all—do you feel like more of a man when someone calls you "man"?—those words lifted me up. Clarence called me his brother! Of course in the minutes and hours and days that followed, as my heart rate returned to normal, I easily put that into perspective. It didn't mean anything. It was a figure of speech, a "see you later."

But what if it did mean something? What if Clarence said exactly what he'd meant to say? And he'd have said it to anyone there in that ramshackle old venue, or even anyone in the world? As Springsteen fans, it stares us in the face, my brothers and sisters. "Maybe our fate is not independent at all," Bruce said on the Tom Joad tour, "Maybe we're all just little pieces of one big soul." *All Men Are Brothers*. "We are brothers and sisters all."

That, to me, makes my grief make sense. I've lost a brother. Did I know him? Not well. But we spent many nights together, and he was my brother—he was our brother.

Clarence never seemed to mind speaking in such terms. In 2003, he told me in an interview for this magazine: "I look at my music as being an extension of myself, and I try to be as spiritual and pure as I can when it comes to the music part of my life. What I bring to people is pure honesty, and pure love, and hopefully it brings some light and joy to the world.... You get enough people who really believe in the music—and there are more of us than you really know—having an outlet, having a way to be able to say it and not be afraid, and know that you're not alone. And the more people who find out that they're not alone, the more powerful they become."

Thanks, Big Man, for your music, your light, your joy, and for making us all feel less alone. Godspeed, my brother.

THE NEWS

New album, E Street Band tour in 2012

Feel the Heat

By Gary Graff

It's going to be an E Street year in 2012—with a new album, a new tour and some special, first-time career events.

The excitement began on November 21, when a posting on BruceSpringsteen.net informed the world: "Well, things are starting to heat up down on E Street. A lot of you have been hearing that Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band will be on tour in 2012. That is absolutely correct. The European dates run from the middle of May until end of July and are being announced this week. Info on the U.S. dates and the World tour dates will [be] coming up shortly. In addition, we want you to know that the music is almost done (but still untitled), we have almost settled on the release date (but not quite yet), and that we are all incredibly excited about everything that we're planning for 2012. That's all the info we have for right now, but we'll get back to you—real soon."

A flurry of rumors and facts followed, and as of press time this much is known:

• The *Born in the U.S.A.* album will be inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame and spotlighted during the February 12 ceremony in Los Angeles.

• Springsteen will deliver the keynote speech at this year's South By Southwest Music + Media Conference on March 15 in Austin, Texas, joining a lineage that's included Neil Young, Robert Plant, Pete Townshend, the Kinks' Ray Davies, Lou Reed, Yoko Ono, Johnny Cash, Steve Earle, Lucinda Williams and others.

• Springsteen and the E Streeters kick off a European stadium tour on May 13 in Seville, Spain. So far 31 dates have been announced, including a number of festival engagements: a return to Pinkpop on May 28 in the Netherlands, the E Street Band's first visit to Portugal for Rock in Rio on June 3 in Lisbon, Great Britain's Isle of Wight Festival on June 24, the Roskilde Festival on July 7 in Denmark, and Hard Rock Calling on July 14 in London's Hyde Park. The trek is slated to wrap up July 27-28 in Gothenburg, Sweden *[see sidebar for European dates as of press time].*

Beyond that, all has been speculation.

A rumored North American tour itinerary has been widely circulated, with 23 dates beginning March 1 in Denver. It also includes a March 17 stop in Austin during South By Southwest (an *Austin City Limits* taping is also predicted), a two-night stand March 28-29 in Philadelphia, and shows April 24 and 26 in New Jersey. The purported itinerary—almost certainly a work in progress at best, rather than something for fans to base travel plans on—at least suggests a general shape for the spring, with North American dates lining up for March and April, following band rehearsals in January and February. Circulating dates also point to arenas as the primary venues for this initial leg, as opposed to the larger outdoor venues of the summer European leg.

Springsteen's camp is not commenting on those reports, but E Street Band guitarist Nils Lofgren says there's great excitement for whatever happens. "All I can say is Bruce has committed us to some shows in the summer, which obviously is a beautiful thing," Lofgren explains. "It means the challenge of putting the E Street Band back together for another go-round, which for me is a wonderful musical challenge and journey, and that's about all I know right now. But I'm grateful for that."

But Lofgren acknowledges that it will be strange to look to his right, where the late Clarence Clemons stood since the guitarist joined the band in 1984. "It'll be more than strange," Lofgren says. "There's no Clarence II. There can't be. I remember when we lost Danny (Federici, in 2008), it was rough enough, and I found myself standing on stage looking at a video of Danny's whole life as a musician, and it was very, very emotional. This will be, too."

Lofgren says he has "not a clue" about how Springsteen is going to configure the band or how he's going to handle Clemons' absence. "I know, as always, he'll do something special and classy as he's always done, but that's a real rough thing," Lofgren notes.

Details about the album, Springsteen's first of all-new material since *Working on a Dream* in 2009, are similarly scarce. After having Bruce join him on stage for "Old Time Rock and Roll" at New York's Madison Square Garden, Bob Seger reported to *Rolling Stone* that Springsteen told him "it's really unusual and that it's the best thing that he's done in years." Ron Aniello, who's worked with Guster, Barenaked Ladies, Lifehouse, Jude Cole, Ian Hunter, Candlebox and others, is rumored to be producing.

A release is expected prior to South By Southwest.

SUMMERTIME BRUCE

Stadium-breakin' Boss Time in Europe, May - July 2012

5/13	Estadio Olímpico	Seville, SPAIN
5/17	Estadi Olímpic	Barcelona, SPAIN
5/18	Estadi Olímpic	Barcelona, SPAIN
5/25	Commerzbank-Arena	Frankfurt, GERMANY
5/27	Rhein-Energie Stadium	Cologne, GERMANY
5/28	Pinkpop	Landgraaf, NETHERLANDS
5/30	Olympic Stadium	Berlin, GERMANY
6/2	Estadio Anoeta	San Sebastian, SPAIN
6/3	Rock in Rio	Lisbon, PORTUGAL
6/7	Stadio Giuseppe Meazza	Milan, ITALY
6/10	Stadio Artemio Franchi	Florence, ITALY
6/11	Stadio Nereo Rocco	Trieste, ITALY
6/17	Estadio Santiago Bernabéu	Madrid, SPAIN
6/19	Park & Suites Arena	Montpellier, FRANCE
6/21	Stadium of Light	Sunderland, ENGLAND
6/22	Etihad Stadium	Manchester, ENGLAND
6/24	Isle of Wight Festival	Isle of Wight, ENGLAND
7/4	Bercy	Paris, FRANCE
7/5	Bercy	Paris, FRANCE
7/7	Roskilde Festival	Roskilde, DENMARK
7/9	Stadium Letzigrund	Zurich, SWITZERLAND
7/11	Synotip Arena	Prague, CZECH REPUBLIC
7/12	Ernst Happel Stadion	Vienna, AUSTRIA
7/14	Hard Rock Calling	London, ENGLAND
7/17	RDS Arena	Dublin, IRELAND
7/18	RDS Arena	Dublin, IRELAND
7/21	Valle Hovin	Oslo, NORWAY
7/23	Bergenhus Festning-Koengen	Bergen, NORWAY
7/24	Bergenhus Festning-Koengen	Bergen, NORWAY
7/27	Ullevi	Gothenburg, SWEDEN
7/28	Ullevi	Gothenburg, SWEDEN

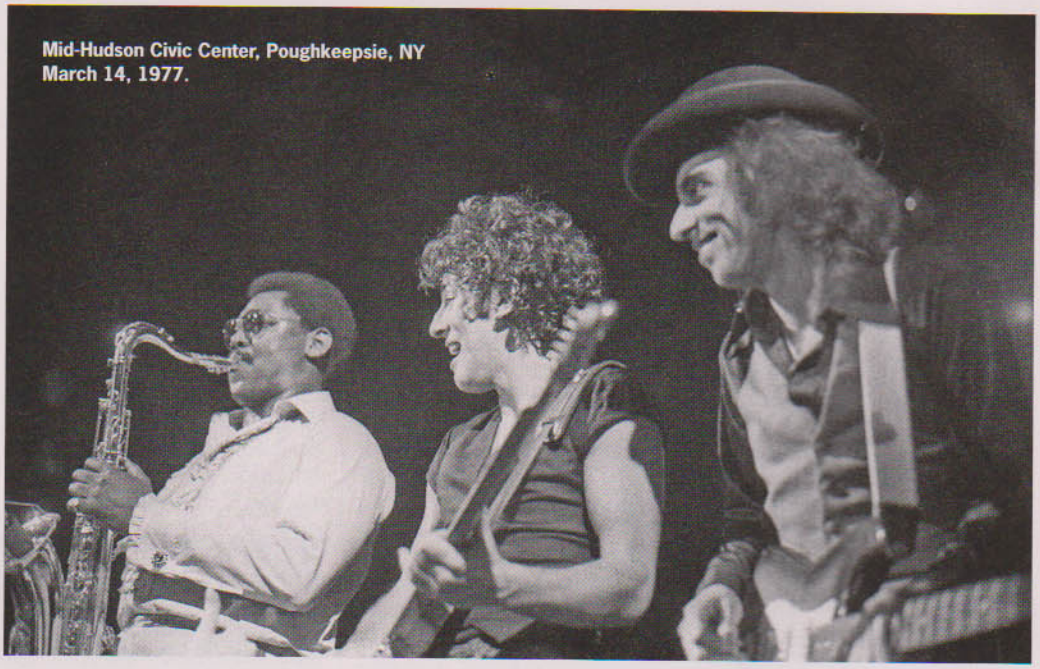
The schedule is subject to change; visit backstreets.com/tour.html for the latest additions.

IN MEMORIAM

Clarence Clemons, 1942 - 2011

C is for Cool

By Glenn Radecki and Caryn Rose



Mid-Hudson Civic Center, Poughkeepsie, NY
March 14, 1977.

JAMES SHIVE/SHIVEARCHIVE.COM PHOTO

The King of the Universe, the Big Kahuna, the Prince of the City, the Duke of Paducah, also known as the Big Man, Clarence Clemons began his 40-year friendship and musical association with Bruce Springsteen in September of 1971 in Asbury Park, New Jersey. The Bruce Springsteen Band was playing at the Student Prince over on Kingsley Avenue, and Clarence was appearing with Norman Seldin and the Joyful Noyze a few blocks away at the Wonder Bar on Asbury Avenue.

As the legend has been told over the years, the door to the club "lifted off and blew off down the street as a large shadow of a man stepped into the back room beside the band." Was it King Curtis? Was it Junior Walker? "He walked to the stage and said, 'I wanna play with you.' What could I say? I said 'sure.'"

This was the moment when "We made that change uptown and the Big Man joined the band" as commemorated in "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out," the song consistently referred to by Bruce as "the story of the band."

A less colorful (although likely more factually correct) version of that story would relate that Clarence simply strolled a few blocks down the street and around the corner to see what the competition was up to. Some people insist that the door did, indeed, get blown off its hinges due to a storm in the area that night. But what did happen was that Clarence and Bruce met for the first time—although they had traveled in the same New Jersey musical circles for a while—and Clarence was invited to play with the band. He didn't formally join forces with Bruce until almost a year—and many surprise guest appearances by Bruce Springsteen with the Joyful Noyze—later, as they embarked on tour for the first time in the late fall of 1972 and then in support of *Greetings from Asbury Park, N.J.* (At the time, Norman Seldin and the Joyful Noyze was more successful, and more lucrative, than the Bruce Springsteen Band, and as related in Clarence's autobiography, *Big Man*, his departure from the Joyful Noyze was termed "a big mistake.")

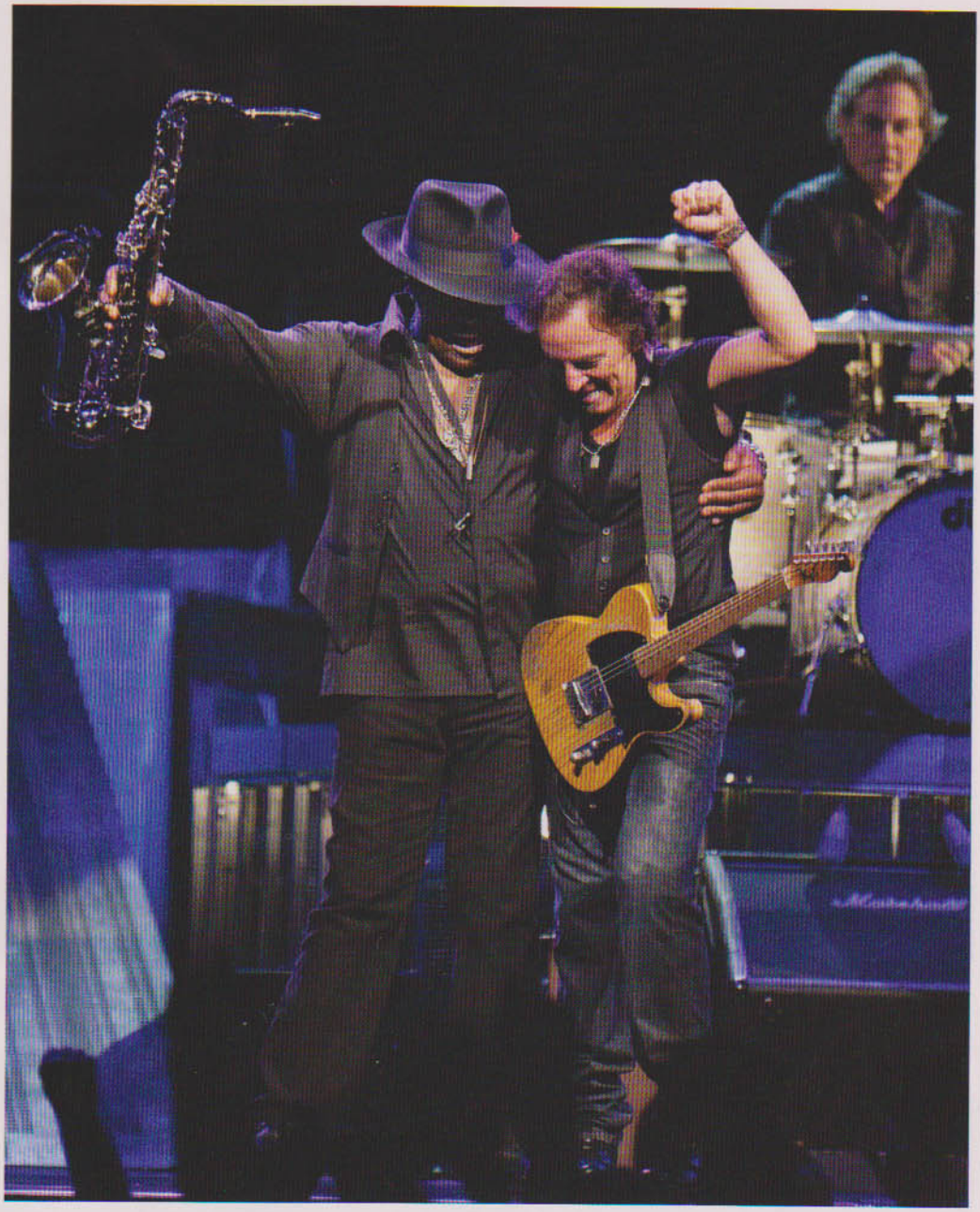
"Without Scooter, there is no Big Man" —Clarence Clemons, from *Big Man*

Clarence became "The Big Man," back in the day when everybody in the band had a nickname. He became known for his fashion flair, rivaling his compatriot Miami Steve Van Zandt on the other side of the stage. ("Back when this was a band that wore hats!") The white suit, the red suit, the hats, the ties, the scarves... it all became part and parcel of the legend, down to the dreadlocks he grew later and the majestic cape he wore on the Working on a Dream tour.

Clarence was the onstage foil, the straight man, the counterpart. He became larger than he already was in real life, a superhero whose reputation was reinforced by the endless stream of superlatives attached to his name when Bruce introduced the band every night. "King of the world... master of the universe... do I have to say his name?" The introductions became a much-anticipated, treasured part of the live show, working their way through the entire band, applause growing as the audience knew what came next. Sometimes it was a simple recitation of facts and sobriquets ("best-selling author!" or "Socrates of the saxophone!"), other times Bruce would take a leaf out of the Stax-Volt treasury and get the audience to spell his name a la Otis: "'C' is for cool, which only a foolish man would dispute! 'L' is for lean and mean! 'A' is 'cause he's the ace of the saxophone!...."

Bruce and Clarence were Scooter and the Big Man, they were black and white, they were big and small. It was still a bold move in the early '70s, especially in some parts of the country, to have an African-American in your band, much less one you danced with, rubbed butts with, and engaged in a long soulful kiss with; the country was only a few years out of the Civil Rights movement and there are stories of gigs the band didn't get and hotels they were told they weren't welcome in. But the pairing would become iconic, forever commemorated in Eric Meola's now-legendary cover photo for *Born to Run*; 34 years later, the world was greeted with the almost identical image as the E Street Band began their set during halftime at the Super Bowl in 2009.

This was in addition to Clarence's active participation, or at least invocation, in the gamut of stories Bruce told onstage. It was Clarence who walked through the woods with Bruce to find the gypsy woman, or it was Clarence that gave him the directions to find God to ask him whether he should be a writer or a lawyer. It was Clarence with whom Bruce drove through the wind and the snow and the tornado, the car falling apart, until the radio broke. It was Clarence in the forest when they were visited by Little Melvin and the Invaders in the spaceship. Clarence was there when Bruce and Steve sat on the porch trying to get up their nerve to talk to Pretty Flamingo, and it was



A.M. SADDLER PHOTO

Clarence on the park bench showing off the pictures of his son. He was front and center with Bruce exhorting the crowd after they played their respective solos during "Badlands." He was the anchor of his side of the stage and during the general admission shows of recent years, his side of the pit filled up first.

Clarence's horn solidified the soul in E Street. Bruce recruited Clarence to complete the final tracks of the *Greetings from Asbury Park* album and then to join the band and head out on tour. "Rosalita" or "Growin' Up" would be unthinkable now without Clarence's role. The saxophone as played by Clarence Clemons soon became a trademark of the Springsteen sound, culminating with its classic role in the *Born to Run* album. And what a role that would be: what would become the trademark solo in "Thunder Road"; the intro and backbeat to the band's own folk tale, "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out"; the clarion call in "Born to Run"; and the now-legendary, haunting wail in "Jungleland," which would become Clarence's signature solo. On the cover, there they were: Scooter and the Big Man, Soul Brother Number One and his most loyal disciple.

While the sax was present in three key solos on *Darkness on the Edge of Town* and showed up on several places on *Born in the U.S.A.*, it was on *The River* that the sax was practically everywhere: "The Ties That Bind." "Sherry Darling." "Independence Day." "Out in the Street." The main riff to "Cadillac Ranch," the heartbreaking solo on "Drive All Night," even the carnal underpinnings in the background of "Ramrod." Additionally, who could forget the original composition created and named just for him: "Paradise by the 'C'," a highlight of live shows in the '70s and on the *Live 1975/85* box set for those who couldn't be there to see it in person.

As befitting the master of the universe, Clarence had other interests as well: he was a rock club owner (Big Man's West in Red Bank); an actor, with recurring roles on TV shows (from *Nash Bridges* to *The Wire*) and some movie work (notably in Scorsese's *New York, New York*). He also had a small but notable solo career, reaching #18 on the charts with "You're a Friend of Mine." He toured in the first incarnation of Ringo Starr's All-Star Band and sat in with the Grateful Dead several times. His session work ranged from Aretha Franklin's comeback hit "Freeway of Love" to his most recent work with Lady Gaga.

In recent years, Clarence's instrument played a key role in modern classics such as "Land of Hope and Dreams," "My City of Ruins," and "Long Walk Home," each number demonstrating that the saxophone remained at the core of the E Street Band sound. Plus, if he wasn't playing the horn during the show, the Big Man made key contributions on backing vocals or on maracas, tambourine, chimes, and penny whistle. His vocal spotlight in "Out in the Street" and his verse of "If I Should Fall Behind" reminded us that there was power in the voice, not just in the horn. And if he wasn't doing any of those things, Clarence was far from idle: He danced. He smiled. He clapped. He shook his butt. He was an always somewhat mysterious, somewhat beatific, always smiling presence in the band.

Even when his mobility had decreased, his presence on the E Street stage remained as large as ever. He strolled on last before Bruce, always to loud and enthusiastic applause, and when his knees couldn't walk up the steps to the stage any longer, Bruce had an elevator installed for him. Sometimes the Big Man would need a break from standing, and rather than just have a chair or a stool, he was provided with an ornate, golden throne, illuminated from underneath. It seemed only right and fitting.

As long as we tell the stories, as long as we play the songs, as long as we remember, the Big Man will always be with us.

A tribute to Clarence Clemons will be the centerpiece of the next issue of this magazine, celebrating the Big Man's life and legacy with tributes from friends, family, and fellow musicians in Backstreets #91.

Family, friends, fans, and Fallon

2010 Ends on a Carousel Ride

SEPTEMBER 11, 2010
BOSTON COLLEGE BENEFIT
THE STONE PONY
ASBURY PARK, NJ

With the Bobby Bandiera Band, Max Weinberg, and Southside Johnny

On September 11, despite the requisite solemnity of the day, the Stone Pony hosted a joyous celebration of rock 'n' roll. Performing for two hours in one of his stealthier scheduled appearances, the Boss ripped the roof off the Pony with a blistering show that was energetic, loose, and pure, unadulterated fun.

This show was a private benefit for Boston College, raising close to $500,000 for a scholarship fund. Bruce has, of course, previously helped his kids' schools in this way, with the Ranney School and Rumson Country Day beneficiaries of previous events, so it was a safe assumption that his appearance on behalf of B.C. would have happened sooner or later (is a benefit for Duke University up next?). Sensing that most of the roughly 300 attendees at the show were not from the area, Bruce acted almost like an Asbury Park tour guide, mentioning certain spots around town and offering the audience more local flavor than he has in the past.

Taking the Pony stage at 8:10 p.m. to raucous applause, Springsteen strapped on an acoustic guitar, and away he went. Backed by a band that included Max Weinberg, Bobby Bandiera and the always-stellar Asbury Jukes horn section, Bruce was in rare bar-band form. Opening with a rollicking version of **"Working on the Highway"** into **"My Lucky Day,"** the Boss smiled and strummed his way through a setlist that included bar-band covers (**"634-5789," "Seven Nights to Rock"**), nods to his youth on the Jersey Shore (**"Growin' Up," "Spirit in the Night"**), and more recent E Street hits, too (**"Working on a Dream"**).

MARIELLO LONGELLA PHOTO

And what would a school benefit concert at the Pony be without an appearance by Southside Johnny? Southside came out for **"In the Midnight Hour"** followed by **"Talk to Me,"** replete with Bruce/Southside banter that can only be described as "spicy." After Johnny left the stage, Bruce drove the place wild with a triple shot of "**Two Hearts," "Darlington County**"—in perhaps a nod to the significance of the date, the band performed this one in as loose and fun a performance as I've ever seen—and **"Pink Cadillac."** Johnny reappeared to duet with Bruce on both **"The Fever"** and **"I Don't Want to Go Home."**

The homestretch of this intimate performance included a beautiful and poignant performance of **"4th of July Asbury Park (Sandy),"** followed by a breathless run of **"Cadillac Ranch," "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out,"** and **"Glory Days."** I can't imagine how Max does it. His powerful drumming took this benefit performance over the top, proving once again how key his presence is to Bruce's music and the live experience.

Reappearing like the Ghost of Christmas Past, Johnny jumped back on stage for an always-upbeat **"Havin' a Party."** Keeping the get-me-an-oxygen-tank energy going, Bruce and the band tore into **"Born to Run," "Rosalita,"** and the **"Detroit Medley"** before allowing the band and the audience to stop and collect themselves. This was Bruce at his best, clearly having a great time.

Before launching into **"Twist and Shout,"** he called his mom and mother-in-law onto the stage; with a little extra coaxing, and some fatherly encouragement, his youngest son Sam joined in to make it a three-generation sing-along on the classic Beatles version of this Isley Brothers hit. And just when we thought it was over, Bruce strapped an acoustic guitar back on to send the crowd home with a beautiful, stripped-down performance of **"Thunder Road."** A perfect way to end a perfect evening. And then, as stealthily as he appeared, he was gone. Like a spirit in the night.

—Marc Turam

NOVEMBER 3, 2010
STAND UP FOR HEROES
BEACON THEATRE
NEW YORK, NY

With the Max Weinberg Big Band, Roy Bittan, and Patti Scialfa

As he has for each one of the three previous Stand Up for Heroes benefits, presented by the New York Comedy Festival, Bruce Springsteen once again hit the stage in November to help support the Bob Woodruff Foundation. But where past shows have offered mainly acoustic versions of a few songs, the fourth annual Stand Up for Heroes show was unlike any he's done before: Bruce came out *swinging.*

Backed not just by any old house band but by the Max Weinberg Big Band, Bruce opened his set with a rousing Seeger Sessions arrangement of *Nebraska*'s **"Open All Night."** This swingin' number featured Max on crashing drums, an entire horn section, and—surprise!—Roy Bittan on piano. At one point Bruce sat atop the piano, strumming his guitar and even plinking a few keys with his foot before laughing and leaping back onstage.

Next up was **"Kitty's Back,"** with the Big Band backing once again. Max has made "Kitty's Back" a part of his band's repertoire, but this marks the first time he's performed it with Springsteen. Roy once again tore up the ivories on this one, with a couple of stand-out solos. Finally, Patti Scialfa was introduced by her husband as the two paired for an acoustic version of **"If I Should Fall Behind."**

In a show hosted by *The Daily Show*'s Jon Stewart and featuring Jerry Seinfeld, how could Bruce resist slipping in a joke of his own? Calling it the only joke he could remember, he very nearly didn't—he exclaimed as he neared the end that he'd forgotten the punchline. Like a pro, Bruce quickly recovered and delivered the laugh (a man meets a woman in a bar, which leads to the two romping in the dark woods. When the man wishes he had a flashlight, the woman replies, "Well, me too... you've been chewing on grass for the last ten minutes!").

Springsteen also delivered his signed guitar up for auction, where it fetched an impressive $140,000; in all, the event raised $2.5 million to benefit the Bob Woodruff Foundation, a nonprofit that works to support injured service members.

—Harrison Howe

NOVEMBER 4–5, 2010
AMERICAN BABYLON 15TH ANNIVERSARY
SOLDIERS AND SAILORS HALL PITTSBURGH, PA

With Joe Grushecky and the Houserockers

In 1995, in between "Streets of Philadelphia" and *The Ghost of Tom Joad*, Bruce Springsteen undertook the most extensive involvement in another artist's work that he ever would in his career (to date). Not only would he play, produce, and write for this artist as he had for Gary U.S. Bonds, he would perform regularly with him as he had with Cats on a Smooth Surface. Joe Grushecky had been on a major label as the lead singer/songwriter of the Iron City Houserockers; his "solo" career as the leader of the Houserockers was marked by fits and starts. In reaching out to his friend and fan Bruce Springsteen, Joe changed both of their lives forever.

Joe and Bruce collaborated on the 1995 album *American Babylon*, along with the Houserockers. Bruce produced, co-wrote two songs ("Homestead" and "Dark and Bloody Ground"), and played guitar and sang on all but one song. They followed that up by hitting the road together to support the record, that fall's "October Assault" featuring Bruce as a "Houserocker for a week." His only stipulation—with the stark *Tom Joad* tour just a month away—was that he wanted to play guitar and "play it loud."

Springsteen and Grushecky have continued to work together ever since, collaborating as songwriters on at least a dozen tunes and playing together on each other's stages once or twice a year. Usually these live teamups are surprises—at least in theory—but to commemorate the *American Babylon* anniversary, the Houserockers announced two November 2010 shows in Pittsburgh with Springsteen right there on the bill.

Unlike the October Assault 15 years prior, which featured Joe out front and Bruce largely there to back him, this pair of performances proved to be more of a collaboration, with Springsteen singing lead on over half of the material. Announcing that he'd be "opening for Joe tonight," Springsteen began each show with a solo acoustic set, as he did at Pittsburgh's Flood Aid concert with Grushecky in 2004. These mini-sets were as striking for their choices as much as the performances. Night one brought **"A Good Man is Hard to Find (Pittsburgh),"** **"For You,"** and **"This Hard Land,"** with **"Your Own Worst Enemy,"** **"Bobby Jean,"** **"I'm on Fire,"** and "This Hard Land" again on night two.

The Houserockers took the stage and ran through just two numbers—the title tracks from *American Babylon* and their latest, *East Carson Street*—before Bruce returned to join them for **"Another Thin Line,"** one of their songwriting collaborations debuted by the E Street Band. And from there, he never left. The set went on with killer versions of both Grushecky and Springsteen songs, alternating back and forth: **"Atlantic City"** followed by **"Never Be Enough Time"**; **"What Did You Do in the War?"** followed by **"Adam Raised a Cain"**; **"Homestead"** followed by **"Darkness on the Edge of Town."**

These songs might have been predictable, but halfway through the set, an unknown but vaguely familiar riff had audience members scratching their heads. It wasn't until Joe began singing that longtime Houserocker fanatics realized it was an updated version of the *Coming Home* era cowrite **"I'm Not Sleeping."** The band transformed it into a rave-up in keeping with the soul vibe Bruce had going at the end of the Working on a Dream tour, with Joe singing the first part, Bruce the middle, and the pair dueting nose-to-nose for the third. If that left the audience's head spinning, no one expected what came next.

A keyboard riff began ringing through the Soldiers and Sailors hall, emanating from longtime Grushecky cohort Joe Peleski. Again, people looked around before realizing it was **"Save My Love,"** the lead single from the yet-to-be-released *The Promise*. To say Joffo Simmons, Johnny Grushecky, Danny Gochnour, Peleski, and long, long-time Houserocker Art Nardini nailed this live world premiere is an understatement. They brought their own beer-soaked bar sound to it, too; if anyone asks why Bruce works with Joe and the

FRANK LANZA PHOTO

COURTESY OF ROSE A. MONTANA

band, send them a link to this performance.

A loose **"Talking to the King"** channeled Elvis, fittingly paired with a goofy **"Fire."** Following their Grammy-winning **"Code of Silence,"** it was party time: the set finished with the Houserockers' rousing arrangement of the Chuck Berry classic **"Down the Road a Piece"** and the Surfari's **"Wipe Out."** Encores kept the house rocking with **"Pumping Iron," "The Promised Land"** and **"Twist and Shout."**

As they were bowing for their good nights, Grushecky could be seen whispering into the Jersey Devil's ear. It seemed we weren't quite done. Bruce called for his acoustic guitar and, alone, sent the audience home with the biggest surprise of the night—**"Thunder Road."** But he wasn't truly alone, of course; throughout, the audience sang with, to, and over Springsteen. It was a communal song, and it felt like Bruce's way of thanking the audience for their support of his friend and colleague.

The second night featured virtually the same setlist, including the "Thunder Road" finale, with five different songs in the mix: **"Johnny 99," "Pink Cadillac"** (which brought a "come on over here and *man-hug* me" moment between the two stars), **"Light of Day," "Glory Days,"** and **"Burning Love."** Bruce was not as "loose" the second night, and the show was much more polished, but each night had its own highlights and left no one disappointed. Though these were billed as anniversary concerts, more than celebrating the 1995 record and tour they celebrated the creative union that continues between a teacher from a small rust belt city and the biggest rock star in the world.

— Christopher Caresani

NOVEMBER 11, 2010
RIDE SCIALFA RIDE
WOODY'S ROADSIDE TAVERN
FARMINGDALE, NJ

With Timepiece

In hindsight, it all adds up. Motorcycles, live music, a family member in the band at an out-of-the-way place... but when it actually happened on this crisp November night, it stunned everyone.

The attention was focused on Timepiece as they played their classic rock covers. Patrons were still at Woody's from an earlier event, the New Jersey Chapter 2 Rolling Thunder Veteran's Day scholarship fundraiser for Monmouth and Ocean County high school children of service members. Against a wooden support column a couple of feet from the bass drum, with a U.S. Secret Service cap pulled down and a winter coat collar pulled up, stood Bruce Springsteen, gazing straight ahead at the musicians and hardly moving. No one seemed to have noticed him. So far, his camouflage was working.

When the band took a break, Timepiece keyboardist Michael Scialfa headed over to where his brother-in-law stood. Bruce was not clearly visible to most, but word of his presence was slowly creating a buzz in the bar. But would he play? He hadn't strayed from his vertical bunker and, for sure, it wasn't the Stone Pony.

After the break, frontman John Oeser was easing into **"Mustang Sally."** There was movement in the crowd as Springsteen stepped a few feet forward to signal for the pass of Terrence Wildeman's extra guitar.

Excitement was building and cell phones were glowing as Springsteen took a spot to the left of drummer Fred DeFeo, adjusting the guitar strap over his heavy coat. When he was set, he nodded to Oeser, and the song took off for one wild ride of trading verses and guitar riffs. The crowd sang along with the chorus, and if telltale smiles were any indication, Springsteen seemed to enjoy the occasion as much as everyone else at Woody's. Following this incredible collaboration, Bruce made his way to the far end of the room, shaking bandmembers' hands on the way to hugs and back-pats with Scialfa.

From a small bar to a major network broadcast, Springsteen was soon speaking of the performance on *Late Night with Jimmy Fallon*, saying he hopped up there with Timepiece because... well, because his brother-in-law asked him to, and he's family.

—Rose A. Montana

NOVEMBER 16, 2010
LATE NIGHT WITH JIMMY FALLON
NBC STUDIO 6B
NEW YORK, NY

With Jimmy Fallon, The Roots, Little Steven, and Roy Bittan

You might have guessed that Springsteen's appearance on *Late Night With Jimmy Fallon* in November 2010 would include a comedy bit—Fallon is a huge music fan whose *SNL* career found him doing such bucket-list entries as impersonating Mick Jagger to Mick Jagger, and his turn hosting the 2010 Emmys opened with a cameo-filled *Glee* parody set to "Born to Run." You probably would have guessed as soon as Fallon brought out his recurring Neil Young impression, after the first commercial, that Springsteen was waiting in the wings.

But if you'd have guessed that the bit would involve Bruce Springsteen making a surprise cameo as 1975 Bruce Springsteen—aviator shades, "Wild and Innocent" jacket, jaunty cap, scraggly beard and all—you'd currently be the king of 30 Rock.

Springsteen's first appearance on *Fallon*—covering tween-pop legacy Willow Smith's **"Whip My Hair"** in his gruffest, most weathered growl next to a host who somehow maintained a straight face—was pretty much a clinic in how to create a viral tornado. The moment where Bruce steps in from the shadows and a few seconds of total time-traveling cognitive dissonance sets in is totally, completely perfect. (Best part: Fallon told *Rolling Stone* that the future-of-rock 'n' roll costume was Jon Landau's idea, and that the sunglasses and jacket were the very same Bruce wore in the '70s.)

And not that we're looking for a whole album of Nick Jr.-age pop covers, but I'll be damned if the acoustic, melancholy version isn't catchy somehow—at least enough that my son could be found humming it while doing homework three days later.

But there was other business to tend to in Bruce's only late-night appearance promoting *The Promise*. The main chatter prior to showtime was whether Springsteen would perform with a version of the E Street Band or with Fallon's house band, The Roots. The answer ended up being a little from Column A and a little from Column B: a music nerd's fantasy-team lineup of Springsteen, Steve, Roy, and The Roots (who prove nightly, having performed with everyone from Paul Simon to Eminem to Christopher Cross to Bell Biv DeVoe, that there's nothing they can't keep up with).

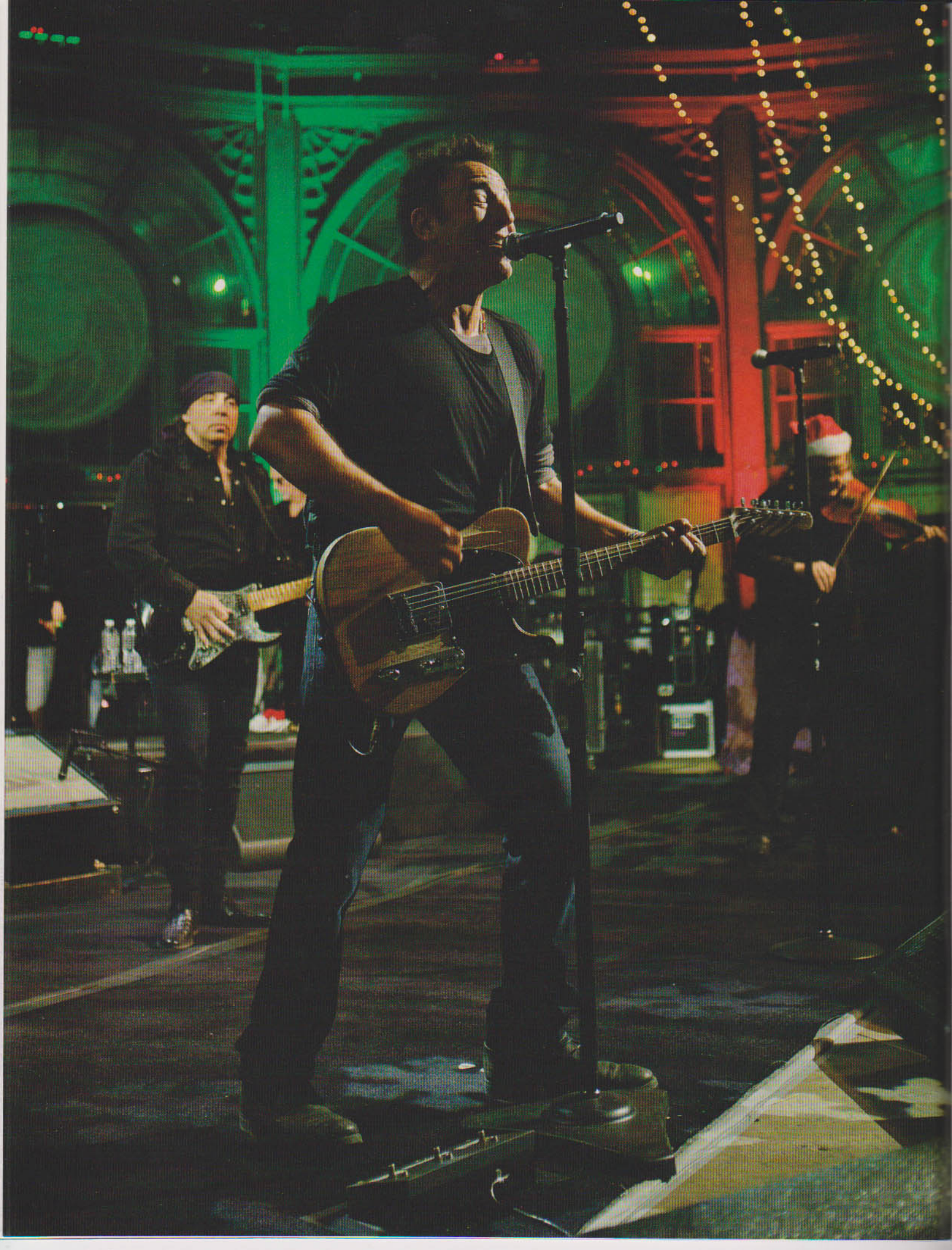
First up was **"Because the Night"**—in a word, a monster. If you're not familiar with The Roots, check out drummer Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson's work especially, but note also the song's previously unexplored tuba

PHOTOS COURTESY OF NBC UNIVERSAL

part courtesy of Tuba Gooding Jr. (seriously, how awesome is that?) and the stepping up by guitarist Capt. Kirk Douglas. He's part of a totally destructive song-ending jam that ended up running longer than anyone (including NBC) had planned and planted huge grins on literally every human on stage.

The second song was the traditional choice, first single **"Save My Love,"** which offered Questlove and Douglas another chance to shine. (After the taping, Questlove tweeted that the band rehearsed 90 minutes for those two songs. It worked.) If there was a downside, it was the show's hour-long running time; it's hard to imagine anyone would have complained if NBC bumped whatever's on after *Fallon* so the E Street/Roots all-star team could go for another few hours or so. Something to think about, guys, when the next box set comes out.

—Jeff Vrabel



DECEMBER 7, 2010
SONGS FROM THE PROMISE
CAROUSEL HOUSE
ASBURY PARK, NJ

With the *Darkness*-era E Street Band, plus Charlie Giordano, David Lindley, and horns

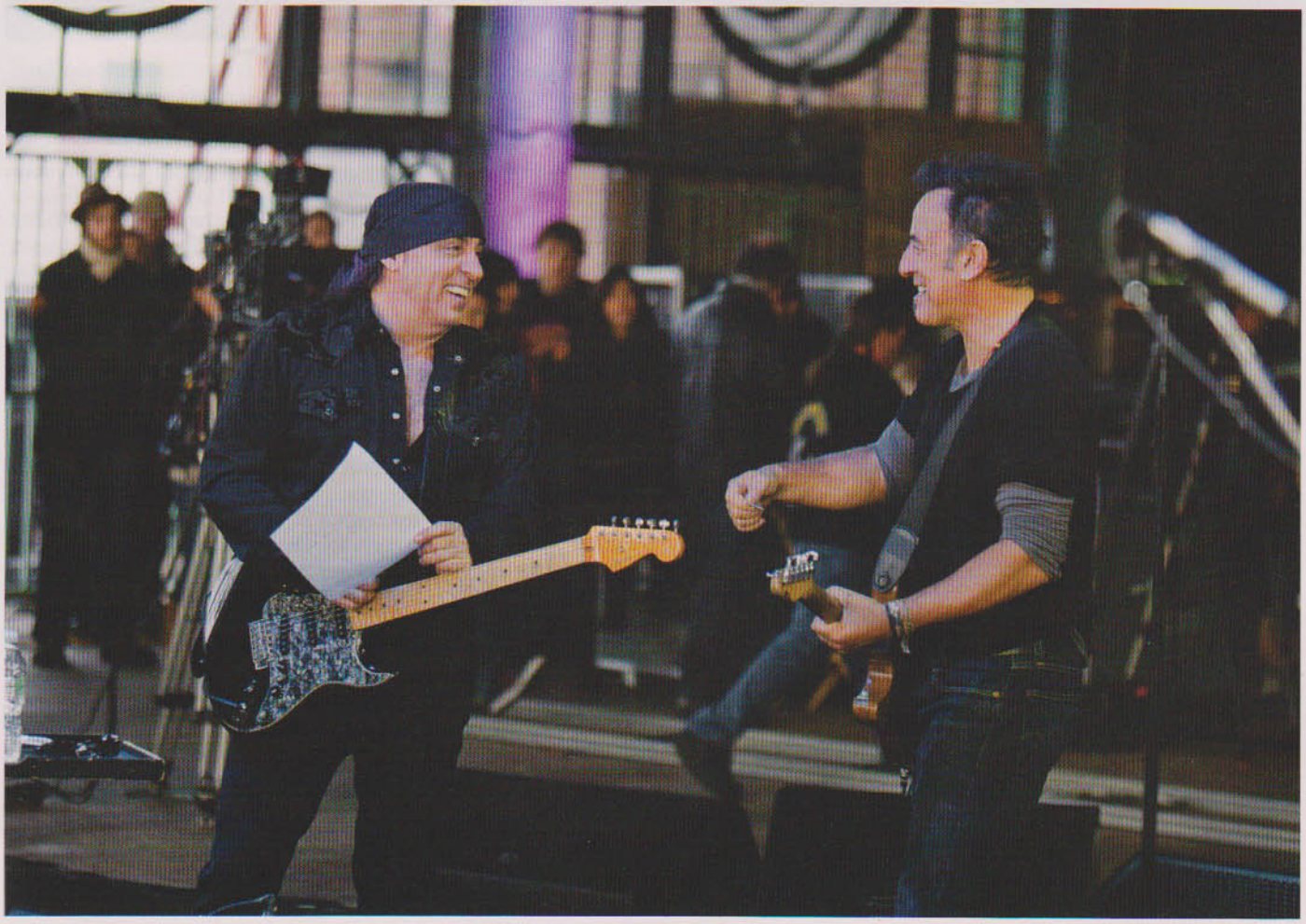
The first and only performance by the E Street Band in 2010 improbably materialized on a bone-chilling and blustery Tuesday afternoon in Asbury Park, at an equally improbable location: the former carousel house adjacent to the old Casino on the boardwalk. Almost a year after Bruce assembled the 1978-era E Street Band members and Charlie Giordano for the *Darkness* live recording at the Paramount Theater on the other end of the boardwalk, he brought the same group together to record the first live performances of material from *The Promise*.

Unlike the Paramount performance, this time the band would perform in front of an audience, albeit an extremely small one, given the fact that the entire E Street Band (plus David Lindley and a five-man horn section, but minus Nils and Patti) as well as band crew and a large camera crew were all assembled in a space that used to house a merry-go-round. The audience was comprised of guests and family members (including Adele Springsteen, prominently placed in front of Steve Van Zandt), together with the lucky winners of a *Backstreets*-run contest.

The configuration inside the carousel house was reminiscent of early *Unplugged* stage configurations, with the audience literally feet away from, and at the same level as, Bruce and the E Street Band. Instead of being seated—or standing—in front of a stage, the audience was positioned practically *around* the band, both behind and in front of them. This created an atmosphere where you could clearly read the charts Max had written up for "Racing in the Street"; where the wrong choice of T-shirt would prompt a personal visit from director Thom Zimny or Jon Landau, telling you to turn it inside out or put on a loaned (black) shirt instead; where accidentally stepping in the wrong place or thrusting your arms in the air a little too hard might accidentally cut off vital electronic connections. No joke: the drum tech lost connectivity with Max because of a kicked-out cord, and Eddie Manion's sax mic got pulled out during an enthusiastic fist-pump by an adjacent fan.

Starting in the late morning on December 7, the band had been rehearsing behind closed doors (but audible to the fans standing outside in the cold along Asbury Avenue) for several hours. Shortly before 3:00 that afternoon, the contest winners were escorted inside to a staging area adjacent to the carousel house (the former arcade that was part of the Casino), where the rehearsal was clearly audible. The band wasn't ready for an audience yet, so tour manager George Travis arranged for a small video monitor to be brought out so that the waiting fans could see as well as hear. Among other things, fans watching the video monitor were able to see Bruce and Steve enact a classic James Brown routine, with Bruce on his knees and Steve exhorting him to get up at the end of "Talk to Me."

Around 4:00, the waiting crowd was led into the carousel house in small groups and positioned in various locations around the stage. Or the area serving as the stage—except for risers for Max, Roy, and the horns, the band was on the black-canvas-covered floor in the center of the space, on the same level as the audience. Once the crowd was positioned to the satisfaction of the crew, the film shoot began with the '78 version of "Racing in the Street." Over the course of the next four hours, the band would perform ten songs from *The Promise*, each of which was performed in its entirety at least twice. In addition, Bruce frequently directed the band to reprise sections of songs in order to get endings, solos, transitions, and even lighting to the satisfaction of himself, Zimny, Landau, or a combination of the



DANNY CLINCH PHOTOS

DANNY CLINCH PHOTOS

three. This was, after all, a working film shoot first and a performance second.

For the guests lucky enough to be admitted to the taping, it often felt like standing just off-camera in Barry Rebo's footage from the *Darkness* box set: the band worked out cues, chords and arrangements on the fly and in the open, whether it was Bruce clarifying Max's drum part at the beginning of "Save My Love" or Steve coaching and conducting the horns at the end of "The Brokenhearted." It was clear, watching the performance, what a perfectionist Bruce can be, and how the smallest details—the volume on a particular note, the speed of a transition in and out of a guitar or saxophone solo, the pace that lights were brought down for dramatic effect—were considered and corrected as appropriate.

The show included seven live performance debuts from *The Promise*, with renditions of each song mostly faithful to the versions released on the box set. David Lindley made a guest appearance to reprise his contributions by joining in on violin for "Racing in the Street ('78)" and "Come On (Let's Go Tonight)," as well as adding texture to "The Promise" and a solo on the show's finale, "Blue Christmas." Bruce also brought a five-piece horn section to the show, with Curt Ramm and Barry Danielian on trumpet, Clark Gayton on trombone, Manion and Stan Harrison on saxophone; the horns joined in on "Gotta Get That Feeling," "The Brokenhearted, "Talk to Me" and "Blue Christmas."

The performances of "The Brokenhearted" were easily among one of the most memorable moments of the evening. Two takes were completed, and then Bruce redid the ending three more times. He kept coming over and speaking with the horn section, discussing how best to achieve the effect he was hoping to get—he wanted them to fade out more obviously than they were able to in a live setting. Steve came over to offer his advice, and in each of the three retakes of the ending, he turned to direct them in the darkness while Bruce sang the ending at center stage, lit in a spotlight.

Here, one of the reasons the ending was taped multiple times was because Bruce gave very specific direction that he wanted the lighting behind him to fade out while still keeping him in a spotlight, and the lighting crew was having difficulty with it (after one take, admitting over the PA that they just forgot). The process of filming this song (which regrettably, in the end, did not make the cut for the webcast) was the most intense example of having the opportunity to observe Springsteen at work, as opposed to Springsteen on stage in front of 20,000 people. As a fan, you've heard stories about his dedication, his perfectionism, and his need to get even the smallest details to his satisfaction; it's another thing entirely to watch it unfold right in front of you.

As the event progressed, Bruce began to directly interact with the members of the audience between songs, chatting and shaking hands during filming breaks, as well as cracking the occasional joke. He asked where people were from, he asked if people were doing okay and having a good time, he talked about his mother and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame exhibit, and he explicitly told one fan (who suggested that Bruce to take an entire horn section on tour with him) that "there ain't gonna be a tour."

As his comfort level with the fans increased, Bruce began experimenting with incorporating the fans directly into the performance. Everyone present was on their best behavior—there was no shouting, screaming or *Brooocing* at inappropriate moments—and as a result, Bruce increased the level of direct audience interaction as the shoot went on. He began by asking the fans to come onto the stage and surround him as he stood on Max's drum riser on his cue at the end of "Save My Love."

After a short break, during which the audience was repositioned (fans at the back came to the front, and vice versa) and the band socialized and chatted amongst themselves, the shoot began again with "Ain't Good Enough For You." Bruce started to walk along the edge of the "stage," but there were no fans to interact with, as there was a track for the main camera between the

12-7-10
Live from the Carousel

Racing in the Street '78 (x2) 🎥 🎧
Gotta Get that Feeling (x2) 🎥 🎧
Outside Looking In (x2)
One Way Street (x2)
Come On (Let's Go Tonight) (x2)
Save My Love (x3)
The Brokenhearted (x2)
Ain't Good Enough For You (x2) 🎥
The Promise (x2) 🎥
Talk To Me (x2)
Blue Christmas (x2) 🎥

🎥 Video released on *Songs From 'The Promise'* webcast and DVD

🎧 Audio available on 2011 Record Store Day 10-inch, *Live From the Carousel*

fans and the band. His solution was to hop over the track and walk along the audience, but that was out of camera range, and he didn't have a lot of room.

At the end of this first take, Bruce announced that this song required singers, but that there weren't any singers in the band any more. He noted that they used to have microphones, but they took them away. Clarence protested audibly, and Bruce relented to say that Clarence is actually okay. He then proceeded to inventory the vocal abilities of the rest of the band: Garry could sing "if pressed into service," and both Max and Roy had to take a singing test before they joined the band (Roy laughed at this mention, while Max shook his head). After this interlude, Bruce solved the problem by determining that the *fans* would sing—he invited fans positioned in front of the stage to hop the track, to come between the cameras and the band. Steve suggested that Bruce sing the entire song from Roy's piano, and Bruce replied that it seemed a very long time to be "situated up there." In the end, the song ended up being a little bit of both: Bruce worked the crowd up front for the beginning of the song, and moved to the piano for the last verse, inviting fans to follow, where he seemed visibly pleased that the crowd nailed the "just like Jimmy Iovine" line, loudly and with gusto.

The full band debut of "The Promise" was a welcome break after the hard work of running around a stage and singing with Bruce Springsteen, as the fans went back to their assigned locations—which everyone did, every single time, without having to be asked. That was definitely the advantage to playing in front of only 59 people; Bruce repeatedly joked throughout the night that they'd like to do more shows with only 59 people, that all future shows would have 59 people in the audience, and that the ticket price for those shows would be, per Mr. Landau, several million dollars each.

Following the brooding intensity of "The Promise," the teleprompter (positioned at the back wall of the carousel house, rather than at Bruce's feet) switched to "Talk to Me" and the horns returned to the riser. Bruce returned the crowd to the same positions he had placed them in for "Ain't Good Enough For You," except instead of ending the song on top of the piano, he retreated to Max's drum riser and again gestured for the crowd to follow. It's unfortunate that this incendiary performance of a diehard fan favorite didn't make the final broadcast, as the horns were fantastic and band energized. This was another one of the many moments during which the band appeared surprised at the fans' familiarity with the material and at the energy the crowd brought to "Talk To Me," which was as familiar to everyone there as any long-time Springsteen concert warhorse.

Crew members began distributing Santa hats (Bruce checked to see if the audience members were allowed to keep them; the answer was yes) as the Christmas lights around the room began to flash on and off. The band performed a funky version of "Blue Christmas," slightly different and not quite as faithful to the original version as had been practiced several hours earlier. By this point, Bruce was comfortable enough with the crowd to wave caution to the wind and invite everyone to come onstage and surround him on all sides, as he climbed onto the monitor and addressed the camera directly, wishing everyone a happy holiday and a happy new year.

With the taping finished, management initially asked the audience to please gather their things and get out as quickly as they could, because the crew wouldn't be able to leave until they had cleared everything out. In a final showing of the incredible hospitality provided to the fans that evening, however, security rushed no one out of the building; Bruce had taken to mingling with the crowd, shaking hands and giving hugs to anyone who came up and said hello, thanking fans for being there as they thanked him for letting them be there, another Asbury Park Springsteen memory in the books.

—Glenn Radecki and Caryn Rose

Next issue: Bruce's 2011 appearances, including guest spots with Sting, Bob Seger, and The Gaslight Anthem.

IN REVIEW

The redhead and the walrus

Lisa Lowell Steps Out

By John J. Kelly

When you consider her career as a singer/songwriter and session singer, it really has been a long time coming for Lisa Lowell. After decades of singing backup for the likes of Bruce Springsteen, Patti Scialfa, Southside Johnny, David Johansen and a lengthy list of others, Lisa Lowell has put out her own CD, a self-released six-pack entitled *Beautiful Behavior*. Though there were countless delays in the recording of the music since 2005, Lisa finally felt she had a body of work that, while eclectic, "might be cohesive."

The delays were understandable: being tapped for her superb vocals on Springsteen's Seeger Sessions album and tour in 2006; the deaths of her father and two close friends, followed by the 2008 passing of her boyfriend (Scott Beal, owner of the label Gaff Music, with which Lisa had signed); and, finally, Lisa's own bout with cancer the same year.

In a phone interview with *Backstreets* from her New York City apartment, Lisa affirms that she finally got her nerve back a couple years ago and, together with producer Lincoln Schleifer, assembled an amazing mix of musicians—including Springsteen, Scialfa, and Soozie Tyrell—to create an album showcasing her songwriting abilities, her strong alto, and a bit of her jazz roots.

"It was the summer of 2009, and I was still pretty broken up when I went into the studio to record these songs," Lisa tells *Backstreets*. "I decided I wanted to use that vulnerability as a strength."

Strength may actually be the best single word one can use to describe the tone of Lowell's record. It's a collection of songs that will have you singing cheerily along at certain times and reaching for tissues at others, an album dealing with both love and loss.

Beautiful Behavior opens with a drum roll on the Scott Beal-inspired "The Big Odd," a song made up of poetic, almost beatnik lyrics. After a brief intro, Lisa's gorgeous voice takes over the song, which sounds a bit like a cryptic riddle. "The Big Odd" is a song with mystery buried somewhere in its poetry. It's backed by both Patti and Soozie, with Soozie on both vocals and gypsy violin.

Next up, "Love So True," with a '70s soul sound, considerably slows down the pace as we are treated to the full-throated vocals that become, after so many years sunk into the background mixes, so recognizable. The lyrics seem to perfectly capture Lisa's mood at the time it was written:

'Cause you might think that you've been broken,
Maybe you're waiting for a cue
To get your darkness in the open
Where the shadows come to view

Lisa's writing is at its most powerful on the epic, angry "For the Love of God," which is thematically different than the rest of the songs. "This is an anti-war song," Lisa tells *Backstreets*. "I was extremely upset when I wrote this. I was thinking of Laura Nyro's 'Save the Country,' Annie Lennox's 'Songs of Mass Destruction'..." This tune ended in the studio with one of those "happy accidents," as Lisa puts it. While recording, she suddenly switched from singing to speaking the lyrics, ad libbing, first noting "Some things just aren't right" and then slipping into a dreamy prayer:

Things are all fine
Just fine
We could all be happy here.

The next track features Lisa at full force as she lets her voice rise and swell on the sassy New Orleans-influenced "Moulin Rouge," featuring Springsteen's gutsy blues guitar.

The record is rounded off by two dramatic compositions, the sumptuous "The Moon Borrows Light From the Sun" and, saving the best for last, "Until You Come Undone," a song about life and death. "This cut," Lisa tells *Backstreets*, is just "perfect in every way," from her lead vocals to the melancholic harp of Hugh McCracken. The song includes a recurring character in Lisa's imagination, a mystical walrus who advises her, in the end, to just cry "until you come undone."

Lisa says much of *Beautiful Behavior*'s refinement was owed to producer and bassist Schleifer, whom she credits with making this project a success, along with the sensational grooves of McCracken and Marc Shulman (guitars), Larry Campbell (mandolin), Joel Diamond (keyboards), Adrian Harpham (drums), Bill Holloman (horns), and of course, Soozie, Patti, and Bruce.

As for herself, "I just tried to write from my voice in a way that I thought sounded honest. Not even pretty. Not even good. I wanted to get something artful because I didn't really think as someone middle-aged who'd had a long career as a backing vocalist I was going to sell a billion anyway, I might as well just make it as artistic as possible and bring all of my experience and my truth."

Beautiful Behavior is available on CD from LisaLowell.com, and as a download from CDBaby, Amazon, and iTunes.

Additional reporting by Holly Cara Price

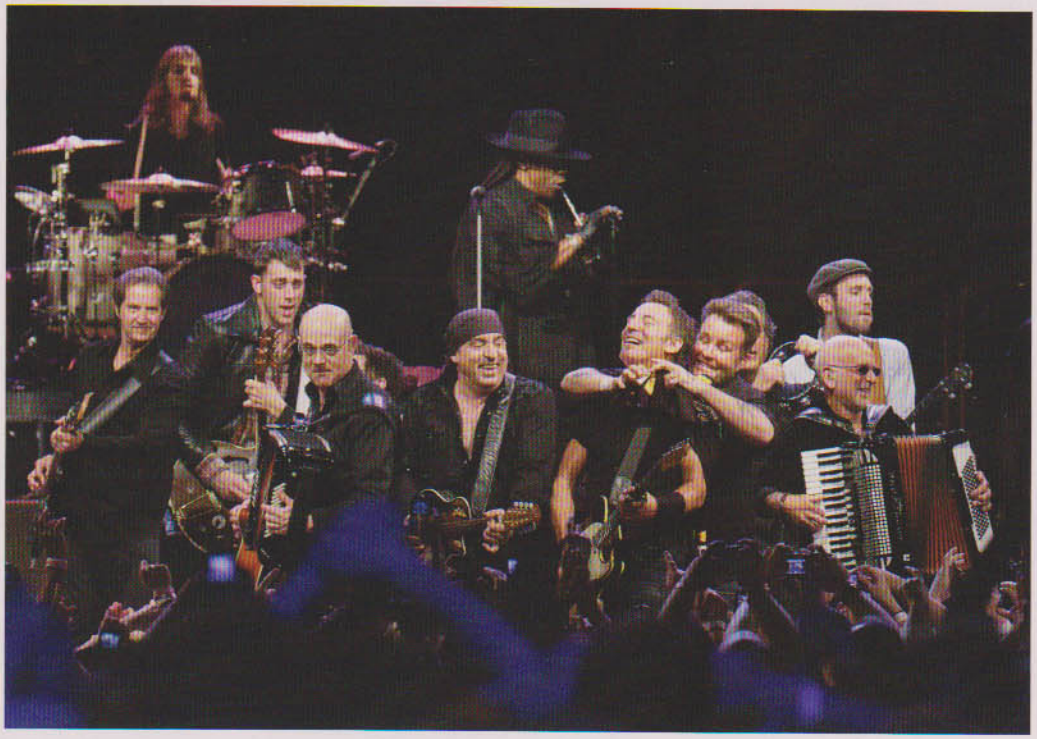
RONNIE FARLEY PHOTO

INTERVIEW

It will come back to you

A "Double Favor" for DKM

By David Menconi



A.M. SADDLER PHOTOS

A few years back, Ken Casey was on his tour-bus ten minutes before going on stage with Dropkick Murphys at New York's Roseland Ballroom. Then he got a call from the tour manager, saying there was someone in the dressing room who wanted to meet the band. Casey wasn't thrilled about the intrusion—until seeing that it was Bruce Springsteen dropping by for a visit.

"I don't consider myself easily star-struck, but that was still, 'Whoa!'," Casey says with a laugh. "But he very quickly removed that, because he's so down-to-earth. Of course we all wanted to hear him tell stories about himself, and all he wanted to do was ask questions about us. It was great, we really hit it off."

That was the first of many meetings between Springsteen and the Dropkick Murphys, a Boston band that plays anthemic punk-pop with a distinctly Celtic flavor (think of a cross between The Clash and The Pogues). And they meet on the Murphys' seventh album, *Going Out in Style*, on which Springsteen does a spirited cameo vocal on the penultimate track "Peg O' My Heart."

Most of their interactions prior to this have been at Springsteen's shows, usually with members of the Murphys being invited onstage for a song or two. One particularly memorable instance was in 2009, when they came out to play "Glory Days" and "American Land" with Springsteen in Boston—as a prelude to Dropkick Murphys guitarist Tim Brennan proposing to his girlfriend onstage. In honor of the occasion, Springsteen and the E Street Band followed that with a performance of "So Young and in Love."

"Tim already had the ring, and we were talking about cool ways for him to pop the question," Casey says. "And what could be cooler than that? It was great, but I was pissed. I asked my wife to marry me at the White House, so I thought I had best band proposal all locked up. Then he had to go and do that."

Eventually, the Murphys got the idea that they'd like to return the favor by having Bruce sit in with them sometime ("Although it's not like that would be a favor for him, more like a double favor for us," Casey notes). Then the band began work on *Going Out in Style*, an album with a storyline of a fictional and recently deceased Irish immigrant named Cornelius Larkin looking down on his own wake. One of the songs they decided to record was an old chestnut called "Peg O' My Heart," revved up to a breakneck pace.

"Both my grandmothers were named Peg, and my grandfathers used to sing it to them," Casey says. "It's a very old song with almost a Lawrence Welk-type time signature. So we had to completely remake it to rock it up, and it turned into almost a '50s rock 'n' roll song. It reminded us of something the E Street Band might pull out randomly. So I was elected to ask Bruce to sing a verse. I spent a couple of weeks working up the nerve to ask and finally sent him the question right before we had to go off to Australia. I figured we wouldn't hear back, but we did—he'd love to do it. He hadn't even heard the song, so there was some trust. We sent him the track, he recorded his part and sent it back. The only downside was we didn't get to watch him do it because we were in Australia."

Casey pauses and then laughs.

"Oh, what the hell," he says. "It's a better story to say we were in the studio with him, so of course we were. Never let the truth get in the way of a good story!"

Following the release of Going Out in Style, *Springsteen further "returned the favor" by playing with the Dropkick Murphys at their St. Patrick's Day weekend concert in Boston, teaming up for "Peg O' My Heart," "I'm Shipping Up to Boston," and "Badlands." View pro-shot footage online at goo.gl/TCYAd.*

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's...

Superboss!

By Shawn Poole

With DC Comics' across-the-board revamp this fall, the company has taken a new direction with their flagship hero: "I want to make Superman a more contemporary character," says comic book writer extraordinaire Grant Morrison. "He's wearing jeans and a T-shirt—a Bruce Springsteen version of Superman, that's the angle we're taking."

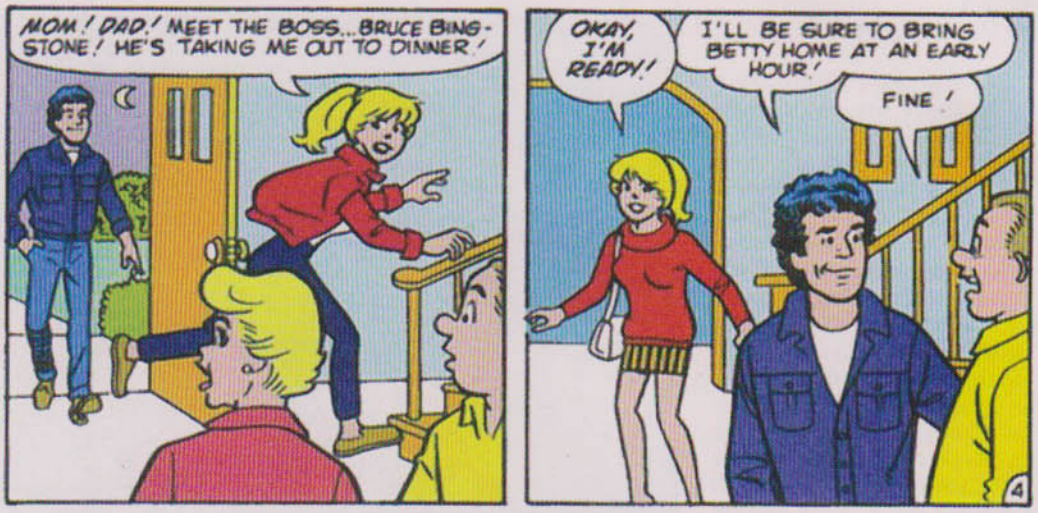
This is far from the first time The Boss has inspired a comic book. Bruce Springsteen wrote and recorded "Meeting Across the River," but Bruce *Bingstone* could've sung about "Meeting Across Riverdale." You've never heard of Bruce Bingstone? Prepare yourself for some truly amazing revelations, faithful readers.

As we soon will see the release of yet another "remastered" Bruce Springsteen project—the 1992 unauthorized, illustrated biography of Springsteen in *Rock N Roll Comics* will receive a high-quality reissue in January 2012—what better time to explore the various depictions of Bruce in "sequential art" over the years? To the Batmobile (so you can read 'em in a fast shake).... Excelsior!

BETTY'S DIARY
ISSUE #1 (APRIL 1986)

Published by Archie Comics. "The Celebrity" story written by George Gladir, with art by Dan DeCarlo, Jr. and James DeCarlo.

Generating a new wave of publicity and much chatter among a certain sector of comic book fans, Archie Comics recently launched *Life with Archie: The Married Life*, an ongoing series in which two possible futures for the main characters of its long-running series are explored in each issue. Archie Andrews, of course, is a fellow who believes that brunettes are fine and blondes are fun. One scenario finds him married to his on-again-off-again girlfriend, the beautiful and rich brunette, Veronica Lodge. The other explores marital life with Veronica's rival for Archie's affections, the equally beautiful working-class blonde, Betty Cooper.


MOM! DAD! MEET THE BOSS... BRUCE BINGSTONE! HE'S TAKING ME OUT TO DINNER!
OKAY, I'M READY!
I'LL BE SURE TO BRING BETTY HOME AT AN EARLY HOUR!
FINE!
4

Regardless of whether Betty ever "really" ties the knot with Archie, her fans know that she'll remain a plucky survivor who somehow always manages to live a charmed life. Way back in the mid-'80s, for example, in the premiere issue of *Betty's Diary*, Betty got to date The Boss himself. (Eat your heart out, Veronica.)

Okay, Bruce's last name in the comic was changed to "Bingstone," but this clearly was The Boss we knew and loved, from all of the *Born in the U.S.A.*-era imagery to the fact that he asked his chauffeur "Terry" to take Betty and him to "Neptune's Place." (Springsteen first met his longtime personal assistant Terry Magovern in Neptune, NJ.... coincidence?)

On the other hand, this Bingstone character regularly used a fog-machine in concert, let his agent dictate his touring plans, and was very reluctant to spend more time in the studio working on his new album... *clearly an imposter!* For better or worse, Betty and Bruce's relationship didn't last long enough to produce the inevitable E Street/Archies collaboration.

"The Celebrity" was later reprinted (with slightly different artwork) in the more readily available collection *Archie Americana Series, Volume 5: Best of the Eighties.*

HEY, BOSS!: A PARODY OF BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
ISSUE #1 (1986)

Published by Visionary Graphics. Stories by Philip Hwang, art by Larry Nadolsky.

A strange and funny set of tall-tale adventures involving "The Boss," "Big Man," and "Miami," loosely based on Springsteen's own in-concert yarns. Originally intended to be a continuing series (with the second issue to feature "The Boss" attempting to meet "The King" at Graceland along with his legendary first meetings with "Big Man" and California governor Ronald Reagan); alas, the title stopped publishing after this single issue.

THE TRANSFORMERS
ISSUE #14 (MARCH 1987)

Originally published by Marvel Comics. "Rock and Roll-Out!" story by Bob Budiansky, art by Don Perlin, Al Gordon, Janice Chiang and Nel Yomtov.

Long before the "robots in disguise" encountered Shia LaBeouf, they had a brief run-in with "Brick Springstern and the Tenth Avenue Band." Another amusing one-shot, filled with lawsuit-proof retitles and rewrites of famous Springsteen songs. Reprinted (poorly) in 2008 as part of IDW Publishing's *Classic Transformers, Vol. 1.*

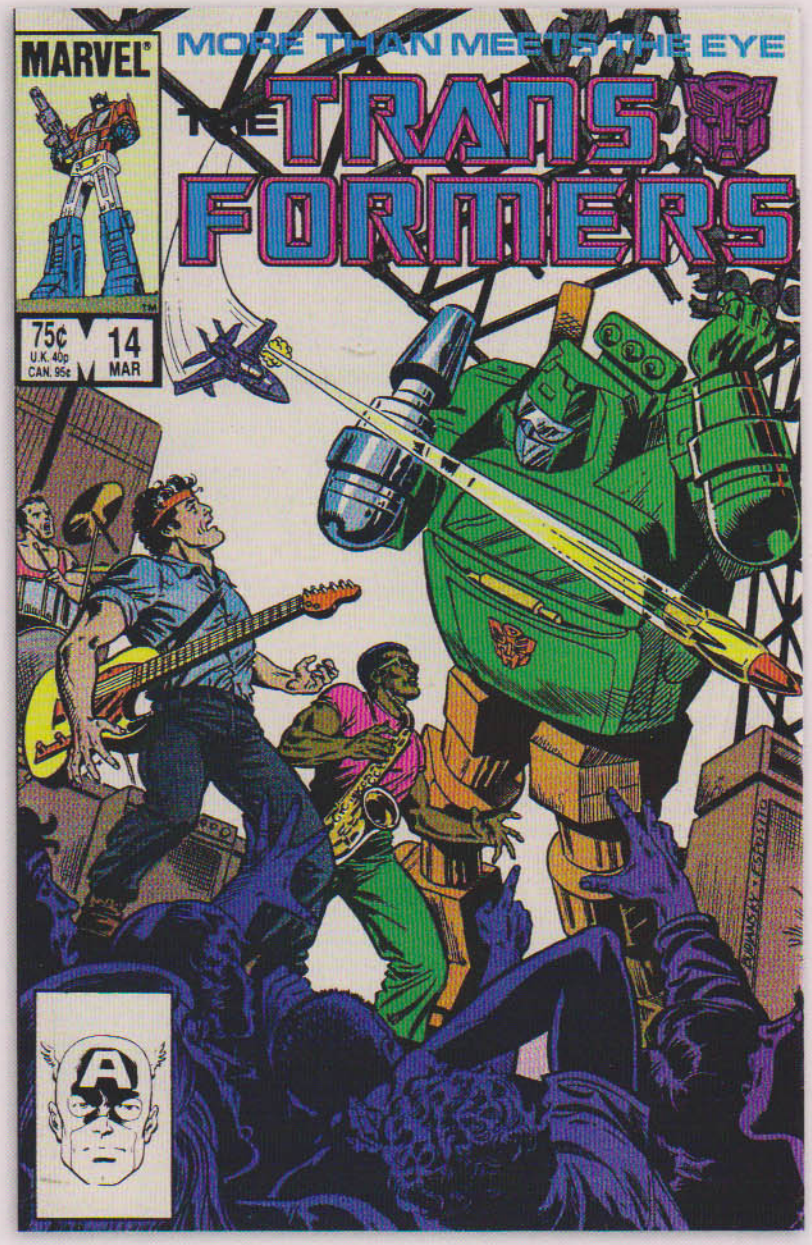
PETER PORKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM
ISSUE #15 (MAY 1987)

Published by Star Comics, an imprint of Marvel Comics. "To Oink or Not to Oink, or The Days of Swine and Roses" story by Steve Mellor, art by Joe Albelo, Pierre Fournier, Janice Chiang and Julianna Ferriter.

This short-lived Spider-Man parody featured a story in which the title character attends a celebrity-filled party at the loft of pop artist "Andy Warthog." Among the celebrities in attendance was "Bruce Springchicken," dressed to the nines in his white "U.S.A." T-shirt, blue jeans and red bandana.

BRUCEZILLA
(Exact title, issue/date, writer(s)/artist(s) all unknown)

This was apparently a Japanese promotional item, presumably issued by Sony Japan in the mid- to late-'80s. It featured Springsteen portrayed as a Godzilla-type character in what constitutes the only known Springsteen-related manga. To this day, it remains on the "Wanted Items" list for the Bruce Springsteen Special Collection (brucespringsteenspecialcollection.net). Bob Crane, Executive Director of Friends of the Bruce Springsteen Special Collection, comments: "We bid on it some years ago on eBay, but we didn't win. Unfortunately, that was the one and only sighting, and I haven't even had a whiff since then. Makes me wonder if maybe we hallucinated the whole thing!" Anyone who can help solve this mystery should contact Bob at pbjcrane@gmail.com.



ROCK N ROLL COMICS
ISSUE #53 (NOV. 1992)

Originally published by Revolutionary Comics. Story by Jay Allen Sanford, art by David Neer.

Part of an early-'90s series of biographies of famous rock, pop and rap musicians. Revolutionary Comics was founded by Todd Loren, who was inspired by Hwang and Nadolsky's *Hey, Boss!* 1986 one-shot; he recruited Nadolsky as the artist for an initial run beginning with issue #1's biography of Guns N' Roses in 1989. Though Loren died before he could see that Boss connection come full circle in *Rock N Roll Comics*, issue #53 literally dramatized Springsteen's career in its pages, in the form of a three-act play a la *Our Town*. The series of unauthorized comic-book bios became the basis for a landmark series of First Amendment court cases that came to define such works as "illustrated articles."

In January 2012, a reprint of the Springsteen biography is scheduled to be part of *Rock N Roll Comics: The Seventies – A Rock Pantheon*, a reprint collection from Bluewater Productions. Sanford, who now creates a weekly strip called *Overheard in San Diego* (occasionally referencing Springsteen) for the *San Diego Reader*, tells *Backstreets* that the reprint will feature higher-quality paper with improved reproduction of the original artwork, easier-to-read lettering, and a few minor corrections to the text. Unfortunately, it will not include any updating or "deleted scenes" from Sanford's original script: "I wrote a 90-page script for a 28-page comic!"

IT TAKES TWISTS AND TURNS YOU'RE NEVER EXPECTIN'.
SOON, YOUR FRIENDS, YOUR FAMILY, YOUR LOVE... EVEN YOUR SIGHT DISAPPEARS.
I HAD A JOB, I HAD A GIRL, I HAD SOMETHIN' GOIN' IN THIS WORLD.
AH, BUT THE LOVE OF MY LIFE WAS MY ANNABEL LEE.

SCOOBY-DOO!
ISSUE #117 (APR. 2007)

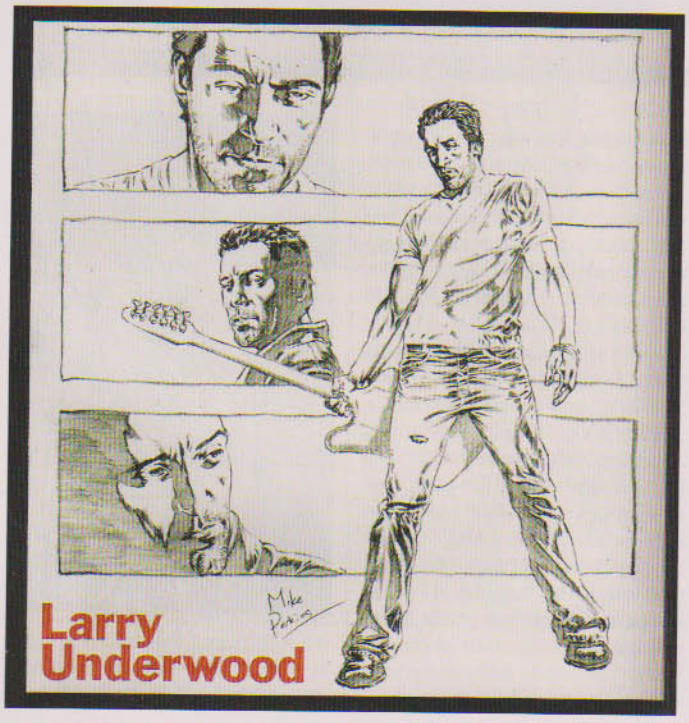
Published by DC Comics. "Kingdom By The Sea" story by Scott Peterson, art by Tim Levins, Dan Davis, Heroic Age and Mike Sellers.

The Mystery Machine gang encounters Edgar, a Poe-like figure who quotes lyrics from "Downbound Train."

THE STAND
ONGOING SERIES (SEP. 2008-PRESENT)

Published by Marvel Comics. Adapted story (based on Stephen King's novel) by Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa, art by Mike Perkins and Laura Martin.

King's epic novel opened with a direct quotation of the final twelve lines from "Jungleland." It's only fitting, then, that one of its main characters, professional musician Larry Underwood, should be depicted in the comic-book adaptation as a dead ringer for Bruce Springsteen *[see Mike Perkins' sketch below]*. In the forward to his "Complete & Uncut" version of the novel, King contemplated the casting for roles in any film adaptations and noted that Bruce "would seem to make an interesting Larry Underwood, if he ever chose to try acting (and based on his videos, I think he would do very well... although my personal choice would be Marshall Crenshaw)."



Most of our readers have heard of this thing called *rock 'n' roll*, so we at *CRACKED* feel responsible about keeping everyone informed on the latest happenings. Lately, there's been a heavy title battle in New Jersey which some call the *This-State-Ain't-Big-Enough-For-Both-Of-Us* bout! The latest update of this fight is illustrated below as we watch...

BON JOVI vs. BRUCE!

NJ
THE GARDEN STATE BOSS
BON "JERSEY"
written & drawn by
EEEEEEYK! IT'S HIM!!!
Who? The press? The critics?
Worse! Teenage fans!
Shut up, Richie! I have compassion! Hey, Bruce! Looks like this is the final resolution for that's not one of my songs! How about this one.

BARACK OBAMA
ISSUE #1 (APRIL 2009)

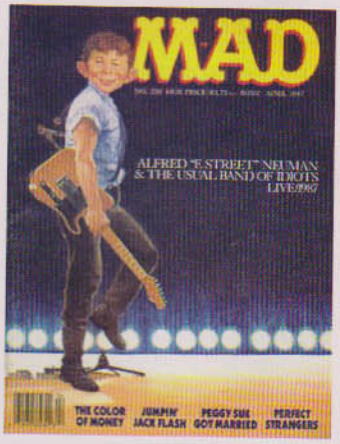
Published by IDW. Story by Jeff Mariotte, art by Tom Morgan, John Hunt, J. Scott Campbell, Edgar Delgado and Neil Uyetake).

In this issue, subtitled "The Road to the White House," Bruce is depicted singing onstage at the Presidential Inaugural festivities with a real-life invincible superhero: Pete Seeger. This story was later collected in a hardcover edition from IDW, *Barack Obama: The Comic Book Biography*.

HONORABLE MENTIONS:
MAD and Cracked

MAD magazine started out as a parody of comic books in comic-book form during the '50s. The first Springsteen reference in *MAD* occurred in issue #230 (April 1982), in a feature entitled "Only a True Rock Fan Would...."

Much more Springsteen-based hilarity, satire and parody have ensued in the pages of *MAD* since then, especially during the heyday of Boss-mania in the mid- to late-'80s. The most high-profile reference appeared on the


MAD
ALFRED "E STREET" NEUMAN & THE USUAL BAND OF IDIOTS LIVE/1987
THE COLOR OF MONEY
JUMPIN' JACK FLASH
PEGGY SUE GOT MARRIED
PERFECT STRANGERS

cover of issue #270 (April 1987), with Alfred E. Neuman himself parodying the cover of *Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band Live/1975-85*.

For its part, *Cracked*, *MAD*'s main competitor during the '70s and '80s, offered a battle of the Jersey boys in "Bon Jovi vs. Bruce" (issue #233, January 1988).

AYOPL

This Greek comics magazine makes the list on a strange technicality: issue #466 sported a concert photo of Springsteen in the *Born in the U.S.A.* period on

the cover. Though he appears quite super-heroic, none of the comics inside featured any Bruce-themed artwork or stories.

Backstreets

To celebrate the tenth anniversary of *Born in the U.S.A.*, issue #47 of our own magazine (Fall 1994) featured a wrap-around cover depicting Bruce as a Captain America-like comic-book hero. The cover was conceived, designed and drawn by Springsteen/comics aficionado Arlen Schumer, with computer coloring by Ian Tetrault. Schumer also illustrated the program and marquee for Bruce and the E Street Band's September 1978 Capitol Theater shows.

Dancing in the Dark: The 25-Year Legacy of Born in the U.S.A.

Published online at boston.com, October 28, 2009 (**tinyurl.com/3ryrcxo**). Story and art by Ward Sutton. The first online-only Springsteen-based comic: a twelve-panel history of the song "Born in the U.S.A." and its impact on popular culture.

THE WORLD JUST STRIPS AWAY

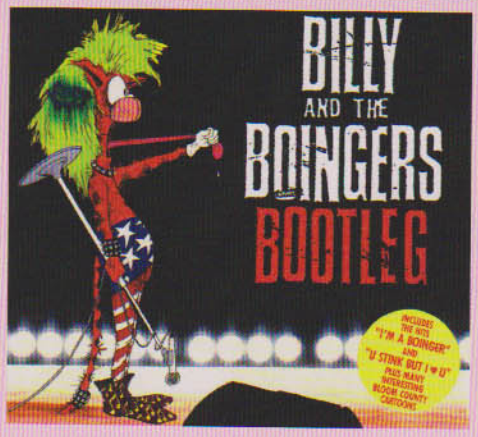
Bruce Springsteen in the Funnies

There have been numerous depictions of and/or references to Bruce in "the funny pages" over the years, particularly at the height of his fame in the mid-'80s. While more than a few of these comic strips may have been little more than namedropping the latest superstar-of-the-day, there still were many created by true fans and/or those who understood Springsteen's cultural importance.

Among those of note are the plethora of Springsteenian references found in the works of Tom Batiuk, creator of the *Funky Winkerbean* strip and a longtime Springsteen diehard. Several interviews and profiles of Batiuk have mentioned the *Nebraska* poster hanging on a wall in his home studio. A multi-day mid-'90s series featured the strip's high-school marching band attempting to play with Springsteen at the concert to open the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

In Bill Griffith's long-running underground strip *Zippy the Pinhead*, Zippy made an early-'80s run for the U.S. Presidency. Long before Kerry or Obama, Zippy envisioned a major role for The Boss in electoral politics, actually naming Springsteen as his cabinet pick for Secretary of Labor.

The U.K.-based '90s strip *Great Pop Things*, which ran in both *New Musical Express* and *LA Weekly*, regularly presented sarcastic, often hilarious "history lessons" on various popular music figures and movements, written and drawn by Colin B. Morton and Chuck Death (a.k.a. Jon Langford of The Mekons and The Waco Brothers). The strip's three-part "Brooooce Story" gently skewered the Springsteen saga. In the notes for the strip in the 1998 compilation *Great Pop Things: The Real History of Rock and Roll from Elvis to Oasis*, Morton took a rare, somewhat serious stance when addressing Bruce's support of a mid-'80s British miners' strike: "Chuck and I are both from mining families, and we acknowledge our appreciation here. This is one of the few instances of us speaking well of a celebrity who is not either Muhammad Ali or Capt. Beefheart."

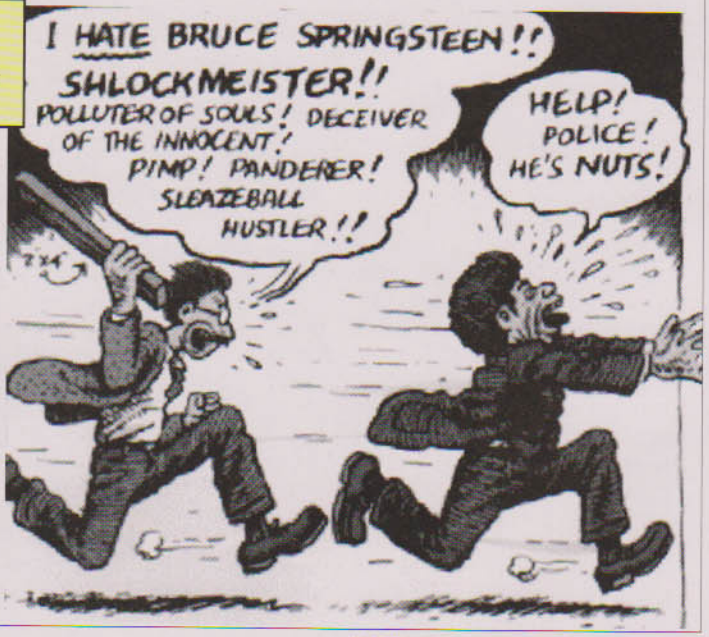

BILLY
AND THE
BOINGERS
BOOTLEG
INCLUDES THE HITS "I'M A BOINGER" AND "U STINK BUT I ♥ U" PLUS MANY UNINTERESTING BLOOM COUNTY CARTOONS!

Driving out of Bloom County, Berke Breathed's Bill the Cat traded his coonskin cap for the green-hair-band LIVE/1975-85 look

The best study of Springsteen-themed comic strips through the early 21st Century was written by the late, great Suzy Shaw Covey, a scholar/librarian/Springsteen-fan who also was one of the co-conspirators behind the legendary Bruce Springstone parody recording (the sleeve of which adds to the pantheon of Boss cartoons). Covey presented a wonderful 71-page paper with numerous references and reproductions of various strips at the first Glory Days Springsteen Symposium in 2005. Unfortunately, just a single copy of Covey's paper is currently available to the general public, for in-library use only at Michigan State University Libraries' Comic Art Collection. If you happen to be in the Michigan area and can visit the Collection, ask for Call Number PN6714.C68 S6 2005.

—*Shawn Poole*

MEANWHILE...
Noted Bruce Springsteen non-fan R. Crumb offers an opposing point of view.


I HATE BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN!!
SHLOCKMEISTER!!
POLLUTER OF SOULS! DECEIVER OF THE INNOCENT! PIMP! PANDERER! SLEAZEBALL HUSTLER!!
HELP! POLICE! HE'S NUTS!

Shore musical legacies continue

The Tides Roll On

By Lisa Iannucci

The June 18 death of Clarence Clemons rocked the Jersey Shore, with spontaneous shrines of flowers and photographs springing up at the Stone Pony and the corner of 10th Avenue and E Street in Belmar (hometown of original E Streeter David Sancious).

Amidst the sadness, however, the local scene continues to grow. New venues include Johnny Mac's, where the ever-popular Status Green headlines several times a month. Several other new local establishments are now featuring live music on weekends, but the most exciting new club is Chico's House of Jazz. Owned by Charles Rouse, Jr. (son of jazz legend Chico Rouse), the venue features local and national jazz and blues acts, including such notables as guitarist Stanley Jordan. The Asbury Lanes and The Wonder Bar are still going strong with bands like The Obvious (recently written up on Backstreets.com) and award winning singer/songwriter Rick Barry's No Wine for Kittens, and Outside the Box remains the Stone Pony house band.

Down the street at The Saint, up-and-coming singer/songwriter Emily Grove is drawing attention from the likes of Glen Burtnik, who now lives in Asbury Park and drops by to sit in every once in a while. Local favorites Status Green continue to charm local fans with their catchy pop repertoire, while The Sunday Blues have established themselves as an alt-country force over the past year. The band's founders Keith McCarthy and Lindsey Miller also host a weekly open mic at the Stone Pony. Newcomers River City Extension and songstresses April Smith and Nicole Atkins have done some national touring—Nicole's CD *Mondo Amore* came out in February 2011—and Bobby Bandiera has been on the road with Bon Jovi's current tour. Both Glen and Bobby continue to present theme-oriented ensemble nights at the Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank that feature both local and national talent.

Midnight at the Stone Pony, June 18, 2011.

STEPHEN GRUVER PHOTO

And it's been a good year for the local songstresses: singer/songwriter Laura Warshauer has been working on a project (assisted by Roy Bittan on keyboards) with producer Thom Panunzio (engineer of *Darkness on the Edge of Town*), Americana artist Linda Chorney has just been nominated for a Grammy, and hardworking country songstress Cory Wagar, who has appeared at several area venues, has made the Country Top 100 chart for the first time with "Hurricane."

Finally, the city is all abuzz with the just-announced news of the return of the Bamboozle festival in May 2012 featuring headliners Bon Jovi and Foo Fighters.

The 2011 Light of Day weekend hit Asbury in January, with the Saturday night extravaganza featuring the event's core lineup of Joe D'Urso, Joe Grushecky, Willie Nile and a certain Mr. Springsteen, who dropped a pair of selections from his recently-released *Promise* box set into his by now standard jam with Grushecky & Co. Springsteen also sat in with Willie, Jesse Malin and Alejandro Escovedo. For Light of Day 2012, to be held January 12-16 in Asbury Park, Grushecky and the Houserockers, Nile, D'Urso, and more will return to the Paramount stage.

Springsteen also turned in a pair of surprise appearances in March at events conducted as part of Asbury Park's year-long celebration of its history as a music destination. An afternoon roundtable discussion at Atonement Lutheran Church highlighted the unique political and social history of Asbury Park, while a live performance at the Wonder Bar that night showcased some music legends from the city's West Side. The discussion, hosted by author Daniel Wolff (*4th of July, Asbury Park: A History of the Promised Land*) also included Southside Johnny as well as doo-wop vocalist Nicky Addeo and Bobby Thomas of The Vibranaires. The Wonder Bar show proved the highlight of the weekend, as Bruce sat in with the house band and even took lead vocals on several numbers, including an unforgettable take on the 1962 Don and Juan classic "What's Your Name." *[See next issue for full report.]*

The spring saw two major fundraising benefits for a couple of ailing Asbury Park legends. Former Stone Pony co-owner Butch Pielka was feted at his old stomping grounds, while founding Asbury Juke Kevin Kavanaugh was the focus of a similar lineup at the Wonder Bar. Both benefits featured an array of Stone Pony regulars from the '70s and '80s including Cold, Blast & Steel; Cahoots; and several versions of Cats on a Smooth Surface.

Both venues assumed the air of a family reunion as familiar faces like Tony "Boccigalupe" Amato, Lance Larson, Ricky DeSarno, and Cats founders Harry Filkin and Joel Krauss (with daughter Alexis of the hot indie band Sleigh Bells) took the stage. Southside Johnny and Gary U.S. Bonds also appeared at the benefit for Kavanaugh; flanked by Bobby Bandiera, they entertained with a set of Jukes staples.

Sadly, Kavanaugh died in early June. As well as playing keyboards on the now-classic *I Don't Want to Go Home, This Time It's for Real,* and *Hearts of Stone* records with Southside and the Jukes, Kevin was a member of Bruce's storied Dr. Zoom & the Sonic Boom ensemble and, post-Jukes, remained a cornerstone of the Shore music scene. Kevin was "part Floyd Cramer, part Dr. John, part Nicky Hopkins," says original Jukes trumpet player Tony Pallagrossi. "His sound was percussive yet very melodic, and he never got in the way of what other people were playing. In my mind, besides the horn section, his playing defined the sound of the early Jukes."

Kavanaugh will be honored at Light of Day 2012 in January, along with Clarence Clemons, Danny Federici, Donnie Bertleson and John Luraschi, at a January 13 tribute to the "Asbury Angels," members of the local scene who have recently passed away. Visit lightofday.org for more information.

Painting with Music by Tom James

Let Tom James incorporate the song of your choice into an original painting.

"Tribute to Clarence"

This painting was donated recently to Gilda's Club South Jersey
at their event at the Hard Rock Cafe in Atlantic City.
Celebrating our 21st year. Our work has been featured on the cover of Billboard Magazine.

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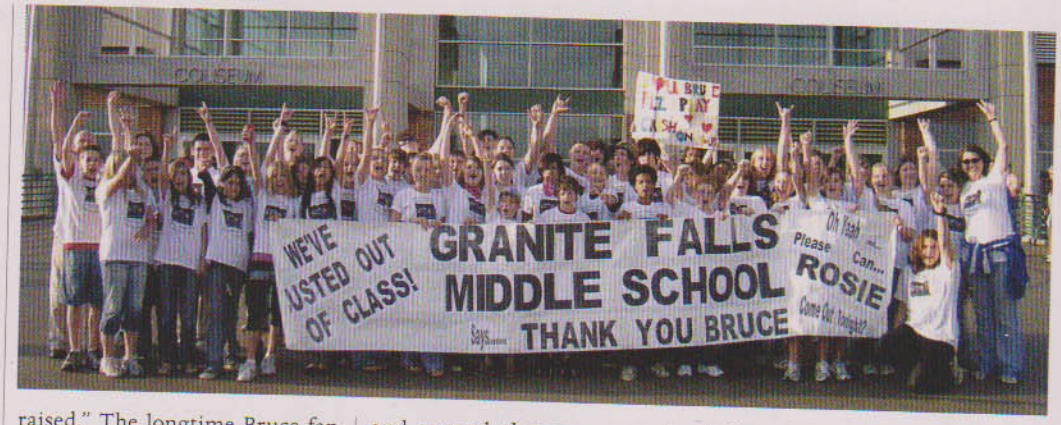
THE INSIDE

More from from a three-minute record

Next Gen Learns Who's Boss

By Janie Rickman



Heart-stoppin', pants-droppin', house-rockin', earth-shakin', body-quakin'... and life-changin'? While it's true that nearly every Bruce Springsteen concert leaves a lasting impression on its audience, not many can be credited with literally changing lives. However, a Greensboro, North Carolina show in 2008, most noted for its Magic tour debut of "Roulette" and "Don't Look Back," would do just that for a group of middle school students being introduced to their first-ever concert performance by what many consider to be the greatest live entertainer in rock history.

This event would lead to another first: a Bruce Springsteen fan club for middle school students. The club, the Jukebox Graduates, began with Michael Telesca, a teacher at Granite Falls Middle School in Granite Falls, North Carolina. "When I was growing up it was relatively simple; you listened to Springsteen, and you saw him every chance you got," Mike says. "It was no big deal, just a fact of life in the era and location where I was raised." The longtime Bruce fan had occasionally used the rocker's songs and lyrics to augment classroom instruction; however, when some of his students approached Mike with the idea of forming a club, he admits he was hesitant at first. Though unsure of the reaction to such a club within the school environment, he envisioned an atmosphere that would get the kids energized about the music while providing a positive and worthwhile experience.

Where else to find that energized, positive and worthwhile experience than at an actual concert? So when Bruce and the E Street Band played Greensboro Stadium, Mike took 55 students and several chaperones to the event. Most of the students were able to attend thanks in part to Springsteen's management company defraying part of the cost of some of the tickets; the remaining tickets were purchased by Mike at a cost of nearly two thousand dollars. "Bruce has been a constant in my life for so long," Mike explained. "I felt that this demographic group of students was largely missing out on having this monumental influence in their lives. Regardless of what I had to spend, I felt that they needed to experience, in some fashion, the excitement that is a Springsteen show."

That concert proved to be the catalyst for the formation of the Jukebox Graduates, which has received positive messages from around the world and even acknowledgement from Bruce himself, in the form of an autographed picture sent without the group even asking. Many of the students who attended that show formed the student organization, which meets weekly after school to participate in Socratic discussions, trivia games, arts and crafts, research-based assignments, and even karaoke. Mike says, "The creation of the fan club... was evidence to me that some of the students, as we say in the Springsteen community, got it!"

When Bruce and the band returned to Greensboro during

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MIKE TELESCA

the Working on a Dream tour in May 2009, Mike wanted to make sure that year's Jukebox Graduates members "got it," too. This time, he procured General Admission tickets for the group and, with a little assistance from Bruce's tour organization, managed to get them to the side of "the pit," within a few feet of the stage. It turned out to be a memorable show for the club. First, Bruce stopped by the group to pick up their rather large "Rosie" banner. Later, he and one of the club members, Ashley, made eye contact and had a "point-off," which resulted in Ashley taking home his harmonica and walking on air. The event was captured not only on the arena's Jumbotron, but in the hearts of many fans around the country. Ashley would later receive e-mails from fans stating that her receiving the harmonica was their favorite highlight of the tour, which made her feel a bit like a celebrity. Not bad for a small-town girl!

Of course for many of the students involved, like founding member Jodie Buff, the importance of the club goes beyond the thrill of the arena: "This is all some of us have that makes us feel that we are different, and that it is okay; and it makes us feel part of something bigger than ourselves. I do know that I couldn't have made it through middle school without the club."

While the Jukebox Graduates engage in a plethora of activities revolving around Bruce and his music, most of their time is spent preparing "The Bruce Springsteen Show," a weekly radio show that highlights outtakes, alternative versions, cover songs, and, of course, official releases from albums and singles. The students spend hours researching facts and information about the songs, as well as creating a script. The show is broadcast throughout Caldwell County, and also via the internet; it was even picked up by a commercial radio station to air during the desirable time slot immediately before Little Steven's Underground Garage, until the station's change in format away from rock 'n' roll.

The students' work with broadcasting has paid dividends as members of the club traveled to New York City this past April to record a series of spots on SiriusXM Radio's E Street Radio channel. Sixteen members of the club, all of whom had never previously visited New York, recorded a series of "Be the Boss" segments which were broadcast throughout the Memorial Day weekend. While touring the city, a famous New York photographer approached the group for an impromptu photo session, which ended with the group singing a rousing rendition of "Thunder Road."

The trip north also brought the club to Asbury Park, where the students were shown the sights by local Springsteen expert Stan Goldstein and regaled with stories of the early years of the E Street Band by original drummer Vini "Mad Dog" Lopez. Sara Little's favorite part of the trip was "riding with Mr. Lopez to Atlantic City to see him perform with a Springsteen tribute band, as we came away with an appreciation for someone who was instrumental to the history of the E Street Band." The students came away from the trip with an even deeper appreciation for Bruce's music, too, as Miller Kirkpatrick stated, "It was great to actually see all the places that Bruce sings about, such as Madam Marie's, or Highway 9, and now the songs have so much more meaning."

Seeing how the kids have embraced the meaning of Bruce's songs has been a pleasant surprise for Telesca. One of his goals for the club was to use Springsteen's songs to help his students learn about some of the most important issues facing our country today, but he soon discovered that the learning went beyond that. He realized that the students were making personal connections with the man and his music. Other adults, too, have noticed how Bruce has touched these young lives. Kimberly Story, a teacher at Granite Falls Middle School, is amazed at the ability of the students to understand the metaphors, analogies, and symbolism in Springsteen's music, and has seen firsthand how this understanding transcends the classroom.

Dr. Steven Stone, Superintendent of Schools, echoes Story's feelings. "I am so impressed with the enthusiasm and passion of the Jukebox Graduates. Young people and music have been intertwined from the first musical note made by man. What impressed me about the young students in this club was their eagerness to absorb all they could about the man, his music, and his enduring impact on music and culture in our country. It is very rewarding to see our students get excited about learning."

It turns out that, for the most part, the students were able to relate to Springsteen's working class roots. Most of the 35 current members are the children of blue-collar workers; some, for instance, have parents who have lost their jobs because of a rapidly disappearing furniture industry. One member named Savannah said, "Some teens have a hard time at school, and Bruce's music always lifts our spirits and gives us hope. I am sure that everyone can relate to at least one or two of his songs." Another member, Miranda, added, "In Bruce's music I can see our lives reflected in the songs because it is stuff we know about and have been through. Like in 'Used Cars' when he talks about not being able to afford all the things you really want. Here in Caldwell County, with so much unemployment, songs like that touch everyone. Usually people say that we are too young to understand song lyrics, but Bruce sings about everyday things, everyday problems, everyday hopes and dreams... we can find some bit of ourselves in every song."

Yes, it seems the Jukebox Graduates club members, thanks to the efforts of a teacher willing to go the extra mile and take some creative risks, have indeed "got it."

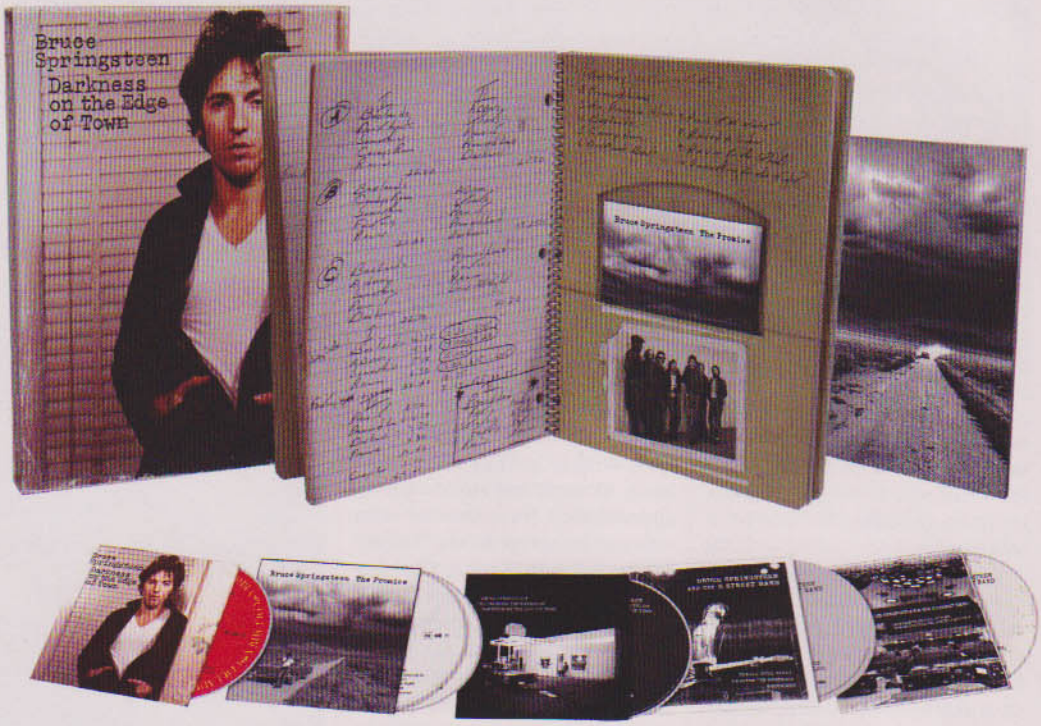
Visit the Jukebox Graduates on the web: tinyurl.com/c83fwfr

IN REVIEW

The Promise: Bruce's biggest release

Darkness in New Light

By Jonathan Pont



The deluxe reissue of Bruce Springsteen's fourth album, *The Promise: The Darkness on the Edge of Town Story,* is the biggest official release of Springsteen's career. Eclipsing the *Live 1975-85* and *Tracks* compilations, it encompasses three CDs, three DVDs, and includes an 80-page notebook. The material marks an all-out effort to fully document an era that was arguably Springsteen's best, one where he was prolific in his writing and recording. And reaction—from the red carpet at the Toronto International Film Festival to the November 16, 2010 release and beyond—indicates that fans couldn't be happier.

Much like the 30th anniversary edition of *Born to Run,* with its *Wings for Wheels* documentary, the new set makes liberal use of an extensive archive of music, film and video. Even more than *BTR30,* it brims with new material: 22 outtakes from the *Darkness on the Edge of Town* studio sessions in 1977 and 1978, at least half of which never circulated among collectors in any form; a treasure trove of previously-unseen film clips; and a complete concert film from Houston, Texas, near the end of the 1978 tour.

Springsteen once again commissioned a documentary directed by Thom Zimny, comprised largely of astounding historic studio footage shot by Barry Rebo and modern-era interviews with Bruce, the band, and other major players. The 90-minute film *The Promise: The Making of Darkness on the Edge of Town,* made its debut at the Toronto International Film Festival in September 2010 and played to a cable audience on HBO the same month before coming home as the first DVD in the box. Fans got a preview of the documentary the same day the set's details became known, and the first clip struck a chord: it wasn't Springsteen and the E Street Band charging through a take of "Badlands" or rehearsing the bridge for "Racing in the Street." Rather, it showed Bruce and Steve Van Zandt mugging their way through an acoustic take on "Sherry Darling," a song they recorded for the album but would hold over for *The River.* In the same clip—quite a representative sample for the film to come, as it turned out—Jon Landau admonishes Springsteen to "close the notebook," Jimmy Iovine and band members talk about the wealth of material Springsteen had at the time, and Springsteen refers to his own "junkyard" of lyrics.

Immediately, viewers got the impression that the *Darkness* era was awash with ideas and music. Too much, certainly, to put out at any one time. As fast as one can say "box set," *The Promise* dismisses that problem.

There's so much material that one may not recall that Springsteen was legally barred from recording because of a lawsuit with his first manager, Mike Appel (who also appears in the *Promise* film). That didn't stop Springsteen from writing and playing new songs. An August, 1976 live version of "Something in the Night," filmed in Red Bank, New Jersey, is among the historical artifacts on DVD two that shows how the songs evolved. By the time Springsteen recorded it, its lyrics and arrangement had changed considerably. Another song from this "Thrill Hill Vault 1976-1978" treasure trove made its debut that year: "The Promise." For the first time (officially, anyway), fans not only get to hear the song as it was recorded for *Darkness on the Edge of Town,* but also get to see it, live in the studio. The same DVD collects five songs filmed live in Phoenix in 1978, marking the first official release for four of the songs. But one might even count "Rosalita" as new: Zimny re-edited all the Phoenix clips, offering a fresh perspective.

A project of this magnitude made a concert video a near certainty for inclusion. Even with the wealth of outtakes from the *Darkness* album that fans and bootleggers alike have circulated for close to 30 years, collectors had not speculated on what amounts to an in-the-studio movie. Rather, discussion of video centered on the subsequent tour. And that talk usually turned to the never-seen video of at least one of the shows at San Francisco's Winterland in December, 1978. (Bill Graham Presents, the promoter, often had cameras set up at the venue; whether tape did in fact exist, was destroyed in a 1985 fire, or remains in the hands of a lone-wolf collector who has never uttered a word about it is unclear. The Springsteen camp has attempted to track it down, but nothing materialized.)

With Winterland relegated to the wish list rather than the short list, guessing which concert would earn its place in the box set became a parlor game of sorts. Largo, Phoenix, and Passaic were obvious guesses, but fans clamored for something they hadn't seen. Enter DVD three, the crown jewel in the set: a full-length concert from the *Darkness on the Edge of*

FRANK STEFANKO PHOTO

Town tour. Ironically, the DVD is titled in part *Houston '78 Bootleg*, yet its mere existence was never widely discussed, and no copy ever circulated among fans. The *House Cut* part of the title refers to the video's essence: some venues used in-house video screens for patrons in the cheap seats. Videotapes of concerts from 1978 and 1980 in Largo, Maryland originated this way, and became fan favorites. Like other venues of the same era, the Summit in Houston featured a state-of-the-art, in-house video system and big screens. These were used during games for the venue's primary tenant, the NBA's Houston Rockets, and for the many rock and pop concerts held there. Fast-forward 25 years and video recordings of Summit concerts began to circulate, including shows by the Who, Aerosmith, Queen and Prince. Given that the Who show took place in 1975 and the Prince show in 1981, a tape of Springsteen's 1978 appearance seemed likely to exist, and as it turns out, it did.

For a "bootleg," the quality is quite good, featuring soundboard audio and multiple camera angles. According to Jon Landau's comments in *Rolling Stone*, the team auditioned several recordings, some with better sound, some with a better picture. Houston made the cut because it made for the best combination. Moreover, the concert features a classic late-tour set list, peppered with four new songs that Springsteen hadn't yet released officially, plus "The Fever," and in the encore, covers of "Quarter to Three" and "You Can't Sit Down." That it took place on December 8, exactly one week before Winterland, is a fine coincidence.

The Promise contains 22 outtakes taken from the *Darkness on the Edge of Town* sessions, including the unlisted fan favorite, "The Way." Some have existed in fans' libraries for as long as the album itself. But a conservative count indicates that 15 of these (including "Because the Night" and "Fire") are seeing release for the first time. At the time of the announcement, there was no way to know whether familiar titles like "Gotta Get That Feeling" or "Come On (Let's Go Tonight)" were the same takes as those that commonly circulate. Similar mystery surrounded other songs: was "City of Night" the same song fans know as "Taxi Cab"? (It was.) Is "Breakaway" the proper title of "Breakout"? (Not even close.) Would the version of "Rendezvous," billed as the original studio recording, feature the psychedelic guitar? (An even-money proposition at the time.)

It should come as no surprise that Springsteen opted to flesh out some of these songs. That's now standard practice for archival editions of classic albums: recent examples include an outtake U2 included on the deluxe reissue of *The Joshua Tree* set, and the Rolling Stones added new elements to five of the 10 outtakes for the new *Exile on Main Street*. Steve Van Zandt mentioned similar activity in the works in the spring of 2010, and Springsteen had previously tweaked songs included on *Tracks*—but not nearly to the degree that he did on *The Promise*. We expected the songs to sound different than their unauthorized counterparts, which rarely circulate from master tapes or in versions that have been properly mixed, but perhaps not *this* different. Most conspicuously, Springsteen recorded new vocal tracks for a number of songs including "Because the Night." The simplest explanation is that many of these tracks were simply never finished, in Springsteen's estimation. Landau told *Rolling Stone* that Bruce did "what he felt necessary to realize the song." As Springsteen wrote in his liner notes, this was music he had "abandoned 30 years ago.... Where needed, I worked on them to bring them to fruition. Many stand as they were recorded all those years ago. On those I worked on, I did what I would've done to them at the time and no more."

"Save My Love," the box set's lead single, was the furthest removed from its *Darkness*-era origins. As the liner notes state, "Save My Love" was "written in 1977, lyrics and recording 2010." As Zimny tells *Backstreets* [see page 53], "there are no tracks in the audio vault of the complete 'Save My Love.' So he brought the band back and they rerecorded it."

Other bands' recent from-the-vault box sets may also have influenced just how rich *The Promise* turned out to be. In 2009, Pearl Jam reissued their first album, *Ten*, and included their landmark 1992 *Unplugged* appearance and a reproduction of the cassette that served as Eddie Vedder's audition tape. And the publicity that surrounded the Springsteen project rivals one of the more extensive promotional campaigns in recent memory: for the expanded *Exile on Main Street*, the Rolling Stones seemingly took over late-night television, print, and radio.

The one thing missing from the set is a fully remixed version of the album. That's something Pearl Jam chose to do for the new edition of *Ten*—a project Brendan O'Brien handled, coincidentally. Over the years, Springsteen had hinted at a lingering dissatisfaction with the way the finished record sounded. "Mainly the *Darkness* album, which was a record that I thought had some of my best songs, but I always felt was a little dry, recording-wise," Springsteen told biographer Dave Marsh. "I felt we kinda underplayed and oversang a little bit, you know." In the past, Steve Van Zandt had broached the idea of remixing the album altogether.

That did not happen for this project, but it is the first time that all its songs got remastered. Bob Ludwig remastered "Badlands" for *Greatest Hits* in 1995 and presumably revisited *Darkness* material again with "The Promised Land" and "Darkness on the Edge of Town" for the *Essential* two-CD set in 2003. But it's important to note that those tracks were remastered specifically for those projects. This time, listeners get to hear the songs remastered in their original context, relative to the other songs on the record. That means a new and different sonic experience.

The set also includes something of an anomaly: a complete recreation of the album, filmed live in the Paramount Theater in Asbury Park in 2009. Perhaps not so coincidentally, this was where the E Street Band rehearsed for the 1978 tour, and the film features the E Street players who recorded the album (save for Charles Giordano, who sat in for Danny Federici). There is no audience; we just get the band, the songwriter, and the music. Whether experimental or included to make more material available in high definition, it's something Springsteen has never done before (though he had rehearsals for the 1980 tour filmed, the footage appears more useful for reference than anything else). It's a stark and striking film, again directed by Zimny, displaying what Bruce and the band do with the material now. An easier way of getting there would have been to simply release a show from 2009 where they performed *Darkness on the Edge of Town* in sequence. But it's fitting that he opted to do something that required more work.

ON DISC

Singles, promos and more for *Darkness* box

Promises, Promises

By Peter Schoefboeck

The long-awaited arrival of the stunningly lavish, six-disc *Darkness* box set we now officially know as *The Promise: The Darkness on the Edge of Town Story* in November 2010 brought with it a slew of notable related items, both promotional and commercial. Since international marketing efforts mainly concentrated on the double CD rather than the full box, "Save My Love" was issued as a "focus track" on promo CD-R singles in the Netherlands, Poland, the U.K. and U.S.; the Dutch and English versions featured black-and-white picture inserts with Eric Meola's moody black-and-white cover shot for the album.

In France, "Because the Night" was chosen for radio airplay, with the song also appearing on a one-track CD-R that was distributed both individually and as part of a special promo package that included a white *Promise* logo cloth bag and a black *Darkness* t-shirt. Sony Germany used the same bag as well, but with different contents: a black-and-white A5 postcard of Meola's famous Valmy Auto Court image, and a sealed copy of the 2003 "enhanced packaging" reissue of the *Darkness* CD. Much more of the box set was revealed in New Zealand, where a promotional advance bundle consisted of the complete double album on two CD-Rs (with "The Way" being properly indexed, i. e. not appearing as a hidden track) plus a DVD-R of Thom Zimny's full-length documentary, *The Promise: The Making of Darkness on the Edge of Town*.

Bruce Springsteen: The Promise Fulfilled, a one-hour radio special CD-R released in the U.S. only and compiling both music and interview excerpts from several of the package's media contents (including audio of three of the 1978 Phoenix live recordings on the Thrill Hill Vault DVD) became an instant, red-hot collectors' item. And finally, a pair of additional CD-R singles highlighting "Ain't Good Enough For You" and "Rendezvous" were distributed to U.K. radio stations in late November 2010 and February 2011, respectively, with both songs receiving considerable airplay.

As for regular commercial releases, the two-CD set in its standalone form came inside an oversized 5.5-inch x 5-inch digipak with integrated lyric booklet in Europe and the U.S. A slim double jewel case was utilized for the "regular" Australian issue, and the digipak variant was marketed as a "limited edition" there. The 180-gram vinyl pressing (on 3 LPs, housed inside a single picture sleeve with picture/lyric inner sleeves and including an mp3 download code for the complete album) appeared as scheduled in North America but was postponed until December in the European markets for unknown reasons.

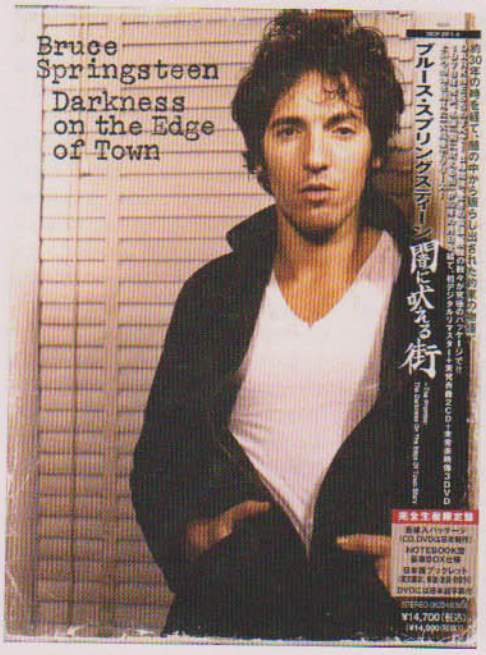
Meanwhile, a packaging snafu mistakenly placed two copies of the Paramount/Thrill Hill Vault disc in some copies of the box and left out the Houston concert disc. Some BluRay jackets for Houston feature the misprint "PointaBlank" in the track listing on the rear.

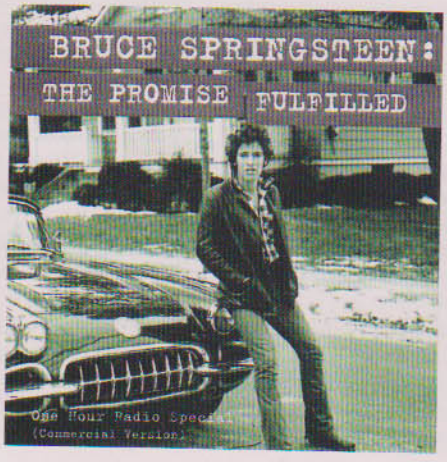
In Japan, the set featured a large vertical obi strip and a unique 46-page booklet added to the standard Western packaging that added Japanese translations of Bruce's essays and of all the song lyrics. This was the only global variant that might appeal to the serious collector, although import copies proved prohibitively expensive.

A two-track CD of "Because the Night" and "Save My Love" was given away as a freebie with a special, 100-page all-Springsteen issue of French magazine *Les Inrockuptibles*. A U.S.-only 7-inch vinyl single coupled the same two songs (with "Save My Love" as the A-side), limited to 5,000 copies and issued

specifically for Black Friday, a Record Store Day event held on November 26, 2010.

Speaking of Record Store Day, the 2011 edition of this worldwide campaign saw the release of another exclusive Springsteen vinyl 10-inch, coupling live versions of "Gotta Get That Feeling" and "Racing in the Street ('78)" from the late-2010 performance at the old carousel house in Asbury Park. The performance was professionally filmed for December's *Songs From the Promise* webcast, but this is the first offical audio release of any of that material. The record came in a color picture sleeve that featured an obvious spelling error of "Racing in the *Sreet*" found on *all* copies circulating in both the U.S. and Europe. The release served as something of a promotional tool for the standalone DVD/BluRay issue of Thom Zimny's *The Promise* documentary in May 2011. Sony ran another of their "exclusive bonus





T-shirt" promotion offers, luring some fans who already owned the *Promise* box set into buying the film again, although this time the label managed to deliver a nice package that comprised the shirt and media inside a special outer cardboard picture box. And of course, the new release added *Songs From the Promise* to the disc along with the 22-minute *A Conversation With His Fans* as extra material.

Hitting shelves in the last week of June 2010, Bruce Springsteen's DVD/BluRay *London Calling: Live In Hyde Park* was met with a somewhat mixed reception by his hardcore fan base, as many would have preferred to see a different 2009 show released, and several arguments were brought forward as to why this one apparently was a "subpar" performance. Still, even the most stubborn Hyde Park hater couldn't deny that Chris Hilson's film features great production value all around, from the well-chosen camera angles to the skillful editing, excellent sound mix and pristine HD picture quality.

Packaging, however, is a different matter—the *London Calling* DVD came in another "eco-friendly" digipak thingy with the unusual measurements of 6.2 x 5.5 inches (which led some less-informed music dealers to believe that this was in fact a CD set), containing a lackluster four-page black-and-white "booklet," and also utilizing non-corresponding photos on the inner sleeve that were quite obviously taken at other venues. An exclusive pre-order offer from Sony (though not made available worldwide) featured a small poster and commemorative Hyde Park T-shirt, with the original set list in Bruce's handwriting printed on the back.

Tying in with the release of *London Calling*, official audio of the Hyde Park concert's opening title number was not only distributed to AOL online radio, but also turned up on a variety of promotional one-track CD-R singles issued in the U.K., France, New Zealand, and the U.S. Most of these featured the usual generic packaging that is now commonplace for CD-R promos (the very rare Kiwi variant being a particularly bare-boned affair that didn't even feature any printing on the disc itself). The French version, however, contained a nice color picture insert based on the DVD cover.

In August 2010, Bruce joined fellow label artists such as Michael Jackson, Aerosmith, Rage Against the Machine and Simon & Garfunkel in Sony Europe's "The Collection" series of specially priced CD boxed sets. Originally retailing at just slightly over 20 Euro (with the price later dropping even lower), *Bruce Springsteen: The Collection 1973-84* comprises his first seven albums *(Greetings* through *Born in the U.S.A.)* in mini-LP cardboard sleeves, housed inside a red flip-top outer box along with a 16-page booklet. A notable exclusive to this set is that the two *The River* discs come packaged inside a full gatefold sleeve here for the first time, whereas all earlier mini-LP issues had utilized single covers for that album. It's exactly the other way around with *Born to Run*, which is included here in a non-gatefold sleeve. Completists should also be aware that the box was available in the U.K. with a slightly different design. Simultaneously, the 2009 European 18-track *Greatest Hits* compilation saw belated releases in both Australia and Mexico as original domestic pressings, each in a digipak.

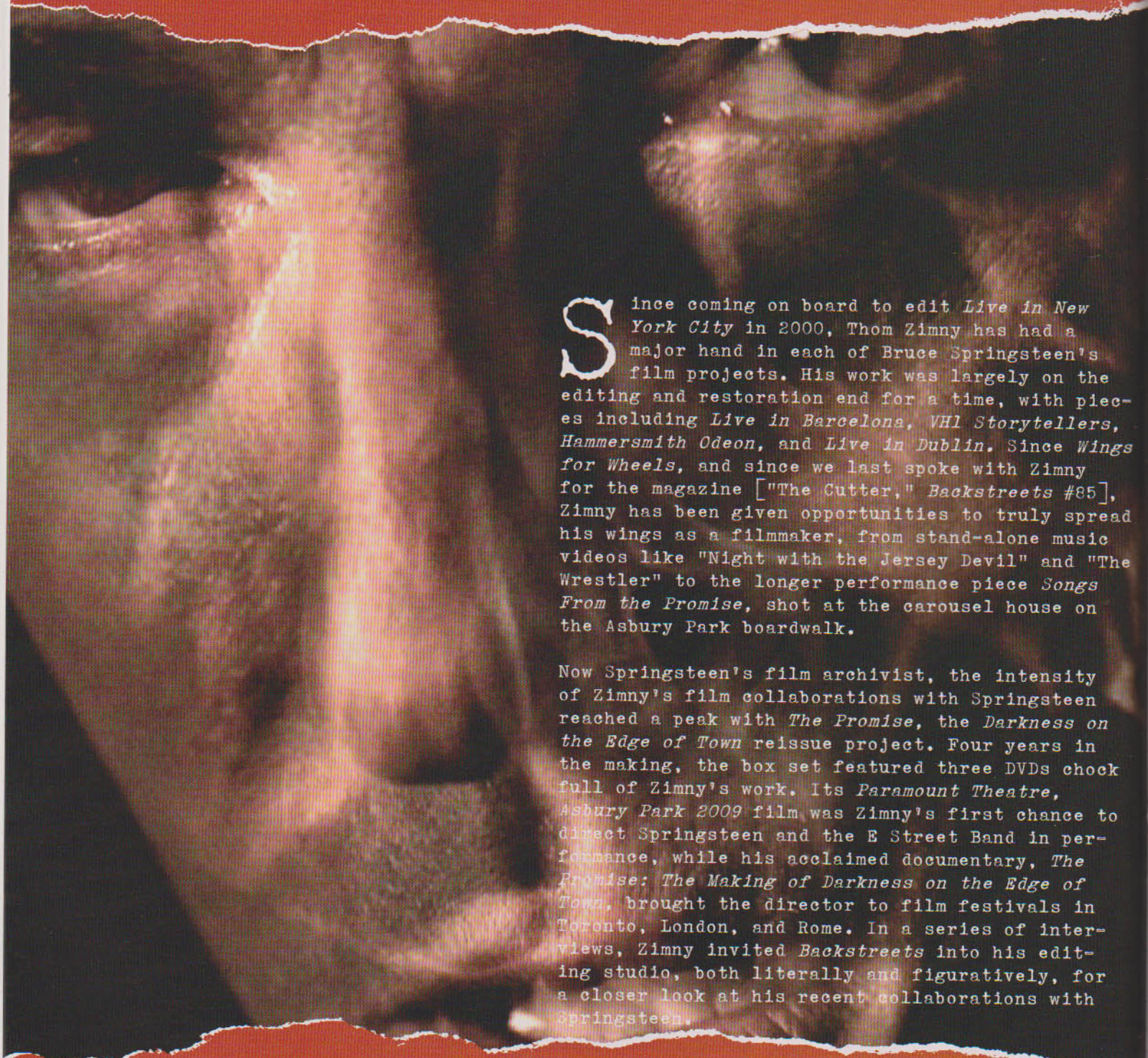
Time-Life issued a three-DVD set in late September 2010 that is full to the brim with live Bruce goodness: *The 25th Anniversary Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Concerts* features the full four-hour HBO broadcast from the two Hall of Fame shows at Madison Square Garden on October 29 and 30, 2009, which saw Springsteen performing both with the E Street Band and a host of other artists including Sam Moore, Tom Morello, John Fogerty, Darlene Love, Billy Joel, U2, and Patti Smith. To close out the first night, the entire cast gathered for a version of Jackie Wilson's "Higher and Higher" that was not shown on HBO but is contained here. Including further appearances by greats such as Crosby, Stills & Nash, Aretha Franklin, B.B. King, Stevie Wonder, Lou Reed, Jackson Browne, and Mick Jagger over a total running time of 330 minutes, this is a DVD set you can't really go wrong with as a music fan in general. *The 25th Anniversary Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Concerts* was also made available by Time-Life on three different CD configurations (two separate two-disc volumes and one complete four-disc package) just a few weeks later, but promotion for all formats was so low-key that many fans simply overlooked these releases at first.

No On Disc column would be fully complete without reports of Boss "guest spots," and lately there have been plenty of them. After Texas singer/songwriter **Alejandro Escovedo** joined Bruce and the E Street Band onstage for a rendition of his own song "Always a Friend" during an April 2008 show in Houston (later officially released as part of the *Magic Tour Highlights* digital EP), Springsteen eventually returned the favor by contributing to Escovedo's 2010 album *Street Songs of Love*, where the two trade lead vocals on an energetic rocker called "Faith." In addition, Bruce appeared on **Lisa Lowell**'s independently distributed six-song EP *Beautiful Behavior* (playing guitar on the track "Moulin Rouge"), which also features contributions by Patti Scialfa and Soozie Tyrell *[see page 18]*; on **Ray Davies**' duets CD, *See My Friends* (where he appears on a new recording of the 1981 Kinks song, "Better Things"); as a duet partner of **Dropkick Murphys**' singer Ken Casey on the band's latest effort *Going Out in Style* (sharing lead vocals on a stunning Irish punk rock version of the 1913 standard "Peg O' My Heart") *[see page 19]*; singing with his wife on **Patti Scialfa**'s first studio track in four years ("Children's Song," a recording that was available only for a limited time and exclusively through Starbucks as part of a Various Artists charity compilation CD entitled *Every Mother Counts);* and, finally *(phew!)*, joining Detroit-based singer/songwriter **Stewart Francke** for the anti-war tune "Summer Soldiers (Holler If Ya Hear Me)" off Francke's album *Heartless World*. Now does this guy know how to keep himself busy, or what?

Additional reporting by Mark Bahlen, Alessandro Cattaneo, Frederic Clair, Jeremy Parkinson, Josef Schrefel, Massimo Truchet, Martin Vervaart and Jyrki Virta.

The Devil & the Darkness

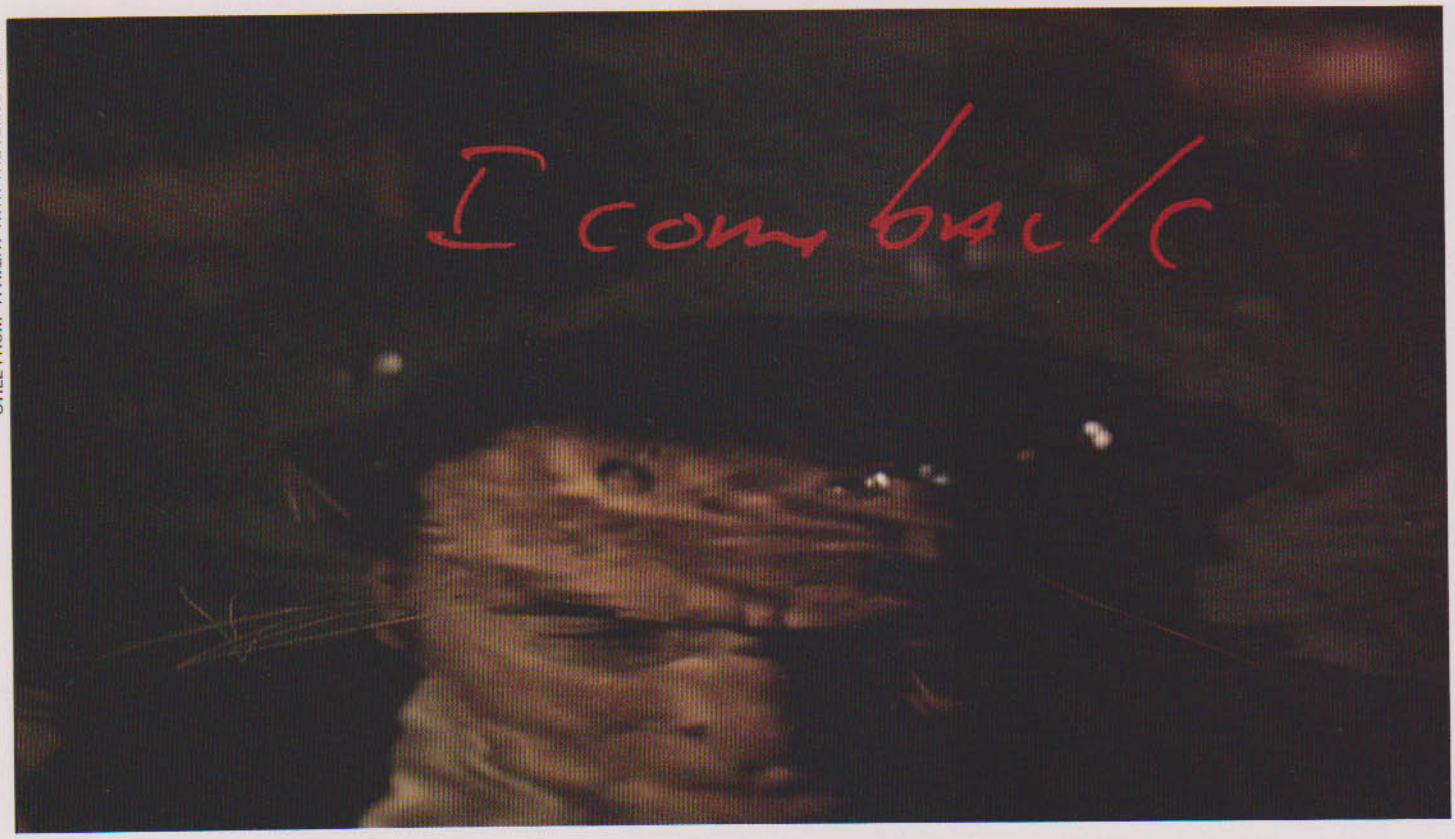
Behind the Scenes with THOM ZIMNY, Part I



Since coming on board to edit *Live in New York City* in 2000, Thom Zimny has had a major hand in each of Bruce Springsteen's film projects. His work was largely on the editing and restoration end for a time, with pieces including *Live in Barcelona*, *VH1 Storytellers*, *Hammersmith Odeon*, and *Live in Dublin*. Since *Wings for Wheels*, and since we last spoke with Zimny for the magazine ["The Cutter," *Backstreets* #85], Zimny has been given opportunities to truly spread his wings as a filmmaker, from stand-alone music videos like "Night with the Jersey Devil" and "The Wrestler" to the longer performance piece *Songs From the Promise*, shot at the carousel house on the Asbury Park boardwalk.

Now Springsteen's film archivist, the intensity of Zimny's film collaborations with Springsteen reached a peak with *The Promise*, the *Darkness on the Edge of Town* reissue project. Four years in the making, the box set featured three DVDs chock full of Zimny's work. Its *Paramount Theatre, Asbury Park 2009* film was Zimny's first chance to direct Springsteen and the E Street Band in performance, while his acclaimed documentary, *The Promise: The Making of Darkness on the Edge of Town*, brought the director to film festivals in Toronto, London, and Rome. In a series of interviews, Zimny invited *Backstreets* into his editing studio, both literally and figuratively, for a closer look at his recent collaborations with Springsteen.

By CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS



STILL FROM "A NIGHT WITH THE JERSEY DEVIL"

Backstreets: **Let's go back and start with "Night with the Jersey Devil," because as brief as it is, it's really indicative of how far things have come since the last time we talked to you for the magazine. Since the *Born to Run* box, you've only become more involved, as a director, at more and more of a creative level.**

Thom Zimny: Bruce and Jon [Landau] have given me a lot of great opportunities to try out some other things, like directing the music videos. My first experience with music videos was actually with Patti [Scialfa]. For her *Play It as It Lays* album, I got the chance to direct several videos, a live performance, and a TV special. The "Looking For Elvis" video had a lot of the elements, believe it or not, of "The Jersey Devil," in that it was a collaboration.

For "Jersey Devil," you were the director, but Bruce did more than just supply the song.

Absolutely. We had already worked on [the *Born to Run* documentary *Wings for Wheels*], so Bruce and I already had a lot of time working together. We had certain film references that we had talked about. So with "Jersey Devil," all that came together. We got to do a lot of things that we talked about, initially, that we wanted to explore in music videos. The whole opening—emerging from the lake—was an idea that Bruce had a while ago.

And it was fun to work on this—we played around with the de-saturation of the image, and Bruce kept coming up with ideas. One of them was the drawings, and incorporating those into the edit; another was playing around with text on screen.

It's clearly Bruce's handwriting—did he do those drawings, too?

He did. In the video you see him take on the character in a very intense way, yet it also played back and forth from something very serious to a bit of a lighter moment for his character. That's where I think the drawings really helped and worked, because it was a bit of a wink.

It's certainly the most acting he's done in a video since "Glory Days."

Yeah, and that era, the *Born in the U.S.A.* era, was probably the last time that he was in that phase—this was done with a really small crew, and it was one intense, long day. The thing about working with Bruce and Jon is that you see their commitment and you learn so much. In the course of that one day... we started at 8:00 in the morning, and we wrapped at 12:30 at night with Bruce in the water.

And that was the last thing you shot?

Yeah, that was the last set-up. You know, it's the middle of October, and that shot, we figured we'd run and get it. But we spent more than an hour just getting that set-up and getting the take right.

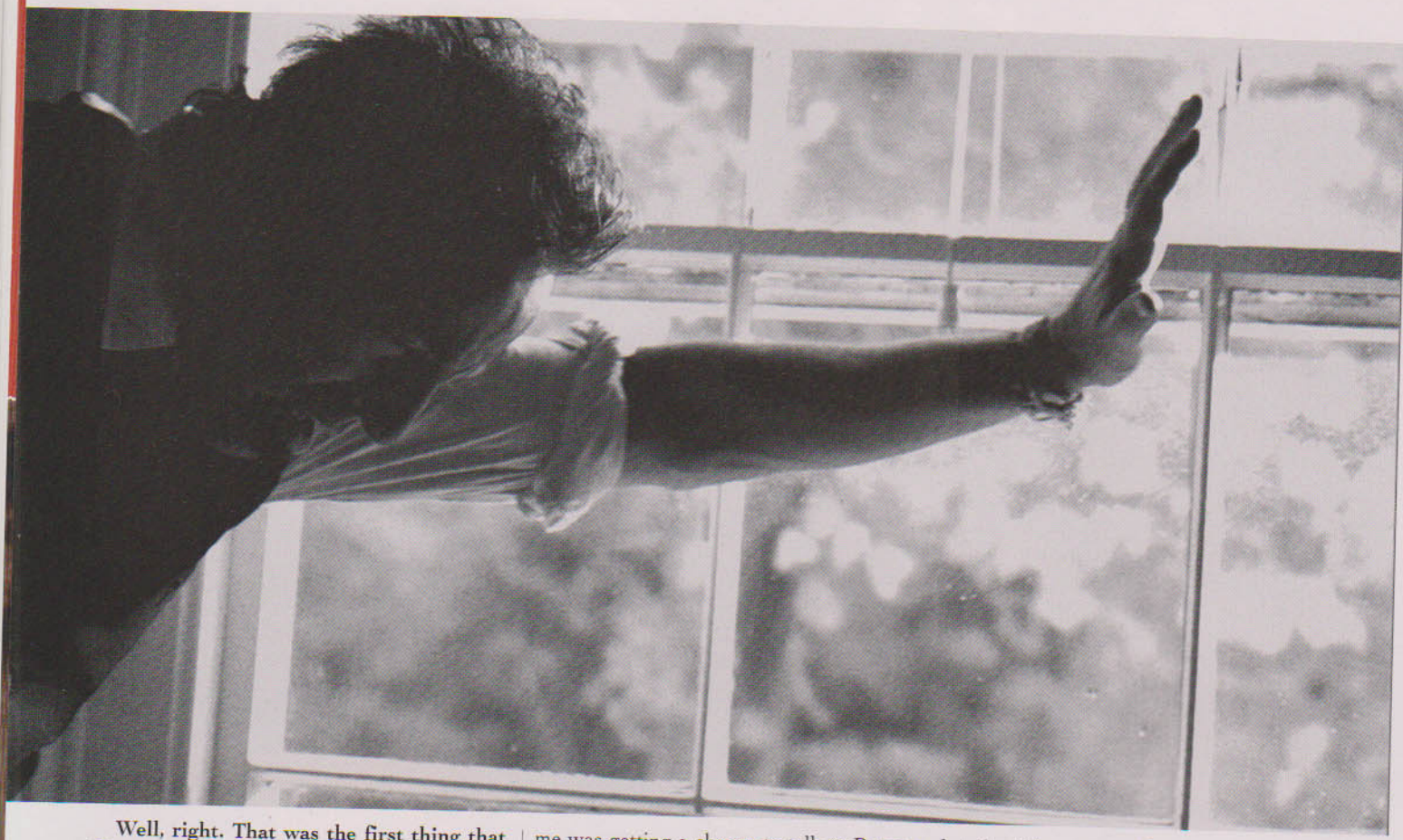
Was it a cold night?

It was! And all day, Bruce jumped on a horse, chopped wood in front of a blazing fire, jumped in the water in the freezing cold.... We were all around different areas of this farm, and we worked a lot on presenting the sides of good and evil, visually, in different ways. Details, like setting up the backgrounds of the barn like a church, with all the candles—all those things are thought out. The necklace around his neck, or the bracelet dangling from his wrist—nothing is random. All that imagery we played with and talked about beforehand, searching for the right tone.

What were your film references?

There's the Charles Laughton film, with Robert Mitchum—*Night of the Hunter.*

STILL FROM "A NIGHT WITH THE JERSEY DEVIL"



STILL FROM "A NIGHT WITH THE JERSEY DEVIL"

Well, right. That was the first thing that hit me—clearly a big movie for Bruce, and he's talked about it before. Even the tattooed knuckles have shown up in a song.

Yeah, it's an obvious influence in this. I've always loved that film, and both Bruce and Jon have talked to me about that film at different times. So we touched on the tone of that at moments with his character and the song. I think where it really came together for me was getting a chance to talk to Bruce and have him deliver the lines to the camera in different tones.

FRANK BORZAGE'S
MOONRISE
DANE CLARK · GAIL RUSSELL · ETHEL BARRYMORE
with ALLYN JOSLYN · REX INGRAM · HENRY MORGAN
Directed by FRANK BORZAGE
A REPUBLIC PRESENTATION

His character going back and forth, as you said.

You should watch the video with the sound off. You'll see that he's going in and out of different characters. Sometimes with rage, sometimes more defiant, you know, looking into the camera. I just never had that opportunity to work with him like that before. He was really working with this idea and really understood the power of the camera. With "Jersey Devil," just like all projects, Bruce is involved with all the details: we talked about camera angles; he understood the power of shooting himself in a certain way, how his performance could be enhanced with certain lenses. So, in some of the close-ups, he looks like he's about to burst through the screen.

Another film that was a big influence was *Moonrise*. It's got an amazing first two minutes; the first two minutes are complete terror, and it's all done through the editing. Jon Landau got me into it—Jon has shared his knowledge of film with me for the past ten years—and it was perfect timing because all of a sudden I was in this Halloween genre.

There also seems to be a Hammer horror influence. Was that deliberate? Or is that just sort of the nature and the language of doing something spooky at this point?

Well, I know all those films, and I definitely reviewed them, and I got into that mindset beforehand. But with "Jersey Devil" it's more that it's set up with a lot of noir lighting in it—a very classic film noir set-up. Besides *Night of the Hunter*, we would reference many noir titles to get ideas across.

So, if I mention the Hammer movie *Dracula Has Risen From His Grave*, that doesn't mean as much as the noir films?

No, though I will say that right before shooting the video, I went through the Hammer films—I have that box set—looking at them for the way they filmed the fire. They were a big influence in that way; there are certain shots of Bruce out of focus and fire in the foreground. So, definitely for some things, but not a huge influence; the film noir element of it is much more where I drew from than flat-out horror.

There are moments where he's looking up to the sky and sort of taking cues from the heavens above *[laughs]*... he'll deliver a line and then look up. That sort of thing was a reference to some of the horror films of the *Night of the Hunter* genre, which was more psychological than the Hammer.

If you look at the video, the straight-on shots of Bruce, where you see he's half-lit—a huge part of that comes out of the film noir genre. I'm playing with what is really not shown, and it's sort of the lack of details in the frame that help.

And those are things that intrigued him, as well? When you guys were talking film?

Those are completely his sensibilities. All these things that I'm talking about are discussions that happened before shooting.

You can see those sensibilities, I think, in the imagery that he chooses for album covers. You look at *The Rising*—talk about something out of focus or half-hidden.

Right. I mean, even *Live in Dublin*, in its setting, that was a very darkly lit, moody piece that way. Bruce has complete control and influence over all those decisions. And the big thing is, with Bruce there in the cutting room, you find these elements together; for *Night of the Jersey Devil* it was this great de-saturated look. We pulled back on the yellows and the reds just enough to give it an eerie feeling; and then cross-cutting it with the black and white, it set up the emotional side of the song.

And in the cutting room, with the footage you shot as director, your job as editor kicks in.

It's amazing how one choice—the choice of what camera angle you pick at the moment—can either defuse a line or give it more power. Especially with a film like "Jersey Devil." In editing, there are a million choices of how one line can be delivered, and sometimes the effect is much stronger when it's not directly into the camera. If you look at the line "Kill Poppa too," it's in a side profile. That's almost conversational; that line reads much more powerfully when it's not sung directly to the camera. Bruce and I in the cutting room always work with those details. What's going to be right on?

There are moments where it cuts to burning flames and the Bible, or just shots of pure fire. I sometimes just pull away from Bruce's performance to get a breath and then go back to it, so it's not constantly hitting you. These are all deliberate choices.

And just hearing you talk about it—I knew this was the case, anyway, but it really strikes me how detail-oriented that whole process is.

Right. I've had an opportunity to work on dramatic film, and this sort of cutting I treated like narrative film, as opposed to music video. I'm working with a story and I'm cutting it in that way, as if it were a dialogue scene with its tempo. I'm not working always off of the beat—I'm really working with performance. That's what I'm really interested in: performance and story. So I'm really lucky to work with Bruce's stuff, because those are the important elements.

And this *is* storytelling, right? I mean, that's a big part of what you do.

Yeah, and that's my connection to this music, in respecting what I'm seeing and hearing the story to be. If you look at the shot of him on the horse in black and white—he's riding, and then it just cuts to him looking at the camera. Right there you have your structure, right at the very beginning of the video. It's full of these moments of just him turning and reflecting to the camera a state of mind. That was the first time I was able to do something like that, where Bruce and I worked with the acting to that level where he would just stop and address the camera. And it was a bit eerie. *[Laughs]*

You'd directed other videos, but a lot of what you'd done up to that point was more about being a fly on the wall, not having the camera be intrusive.

Each one has been a different journey. The *Born to Run* doc, of course... "Radio Nowhere," which I guess was my first official music video for Bruce. And then "Long Walk Home," which was the start of having him look into the camera and getting a performance in that sense.

With "Long Walk Home" he delivers that great line—the courthouse line—and he looks directly into the camera. I got a great suggestion from Jon to leave it on his face in that moment, and there are no edits. Nothing goes on. It just stays on him, and he just takes the moment.

To me, this is a great example of why I love the work and the process, and how it's all about the details. I recall asking Bruce to challenge the camera on a take—to advance forward and lean into the camera crew's space, to take them by surprise. When he did that... it got that moment. He said those lines with such intensity. Jon saw that moment too, and the need to see that message. It served the music and the story perfectly. And we each brought something to that brief moment—that's the process for me.

It's interesting that you mention that "courthouse" line because that, to me, is the crux of "Long Walk Home." Knowing the song from the Seeger Sessions tour, it was sort of a surprise to hear the studio version of it on *Magic* and hear how that line was not really stressed in the recording. In the production of the song, I wanted a little bit more accent on that line, I guess, just to set it apart. So it was cool to see your video putting the accent back there, when he has that moment looking into the camera.

It's a beautiful line, and I remember being on set and seeing him deliver that, seeing him lean into the camera when he delivered it, and I just knew. Sometimes in cutting you'll find one take, one moment, and you build the whole edit around the beauty of that moment—all the videos have that. In "Long Walk Home," that was the moment. In "Jersey Devil," I found it really beautiful to see him ride the horse with the wind blowing, coupled with the other shot of him on the horse just looking to camera. There's something so sinister about those two ordinary moments. When you have those moments and you put them against the track, and then the cut starts to talk to you, you have a reference point and you just build from that.

And the horse was "the moment" for you, more than Bruce rising out of the water?

I think so, for me. Because rising out of the water was a shot that Bruce described to me a long while ago. It's obviously an homage to the *Apocalypse Now* moment. We got it right after many takes, and it worked. I always felt like it was part of the song—but it was prescribed where it was going to be, and it had to be the beginning: the start of the evil coming out of the earth.

But when you're cutting, and you're looking at footage, and the sound and pictures, and one thing clicks... then you just try to stay with that one exciting feeling of "this is the right image. This is the right moment in the song." You use that as a an emotional guide. And you can be surprised: sometimes what will seem like a small moment on set, when you put it against a track, all of a sudden it takes a new life.

So, those moments happen for you in the editing room as opposed to behind the camera?

It cuts both ways. But a lot of times you're shocked in the edit room with the power of the image. For example, again, Bruce on the horse. In reality, it wasn't as powerful. But when you made that image black and white and in slow motion, all of a sudden it took on a whole different meaning.

You talk about this as a collaboration with Bruce, and it's interesting, this is one

STILL FROM "A NIGHT WITH THE JERSEY DEVIL"

of the few Springsteen songs—the only one I can think of right now—that doesn't work as well without the visual element. Was the song completely done when Bruce brought it to you?

At that point, yeah. It was something that was a small project, being that it was just going to be a fun music video for Halloween.

At the same time, it was one of the most intriguing things he'd done in a while, just because it was so far outside of his usual album/tour/album/tour routine. It was such a fun surprise to wake up on Halloween and find that thing there.

Yeah, I think it was an exciting way to use the internet—just the way I feel like the online concert clips have been on brucespringsteen.net. It was a great way to use the net. And we just took a lot of chances; for me, it was one of my favorite shoots.

And it must have paved the way for "The Wrestler."

I think it opened things up. After the performance in "Jersey Devil," Jon called me up and said he was thinking about having me work on "The Wrestler."

Which basically starts with Bruce looking into the camera.

I was really caught up with the opening of the song, and I spent a lot of time with just the extended intro. When I like something, I play it many, many times. I was caught up in that opening, and figuring out the tone that I wanted by that opening riff.

Again, Bruce and I talked a lot about the details—you know, the American flag in the background. It's kind of a beat up, old American flag. It's a real gym. There are wrestling posters in the background, all the details, including a wrestling poster from Convention Hall, an Asbury Park moment. The ropes on the ring are the old-style ropes.

Where did you shoot? And how much of that was set dressing?

It was shot in New Jersey, in a place that trains both wrestlers and boxers. And to find a gym like this was kind of hard at this point, because most of them are just so slick. They're just so clean, and they're so bright. So we found this gym, and then we dressed and did the art direction for it.

And how much of that was required? For instance, those ropes?

Those ropes were covered with plastic—a safety measure so that if you went against them, you wouldn't get hurt. So we had all that removed. All the walls were covered with modern-day stuff, no references to wrestling, so all that was dressed. The American flag that's up there, it didn't exist. Those sorts of details, just like a film, are put up and created to tell the story. And with this one, I felt like we would push it even more—Bruce and I had talked about capturing the character this way, with close-ups, and we went to a

ROB DEMARTIN PHOTO

CONVENTION HALL
CRUSHER O'DOOL
CONNIE PETRULLI
SHANE McDOOM
PEP
TERRANOVA
FREISTIL-RINGEN
Bern-Zürich
ZURICH 1933

DANNY CLINCH PHOTO

different level with it. For myself, I was really happy to see his portrayal of this *character*.

Well, that's right. When you talked about "Jersey Devil" and Bruce looking into the camera, of course I think about the "Brilliant Disguise" video, which I find really powerful. But in terms of doing so in character, *acting* to the camera, "The Wrestler" is another step.

"The Wrestler" and "The Jersey Devil" are my favorite music videos right now, because I feel like I was able to work with Bruce in a way that really covered a lot of the details and also worked for performance. Again, every detail was planned. Bruce's rings—you know, he wore the bracelet in the other shoot, and looked really great—we discussed all these details so that they fit within the context of the story and the character.

With a video like "The Wrestler," you see the chances that he wants to take. There's a line that's delivered completely in silhouette when he walks up to the rope. And that's a wonderful moment. "I always leave with less than I had before." Which could easily be played with him looking into the camera, sad... but it's more powerful seeing him walk into silhouette, into darkness.

A lot of this video was really about working with light. I had a fantastic cinematographer who really understood that balance between getting the atmosphere to feel like it's a gym, but there's also this sense of redemption or healing that goes on when he walks away from that gym. It's the light.

And with "The Wrestler" there are lights that are being manipulated while the camera's moving around, and Bruce is literally working with the lighting situation itself, while singing. Performing the song, he's walking in and out of light.

Something he's not exactly unfamiliar with.

Well, right. He works within the space and has an understanding of the power of the lights, the way they are set up, so that, literally, he'll walk into the dark on a key line. I've set up these lights that give him an opportunity. He's picking up on that, and he's working with that as a performer. Which makes it exciting because, on set, we're making this together at that moment. Spontaneously, Bruce sees that he falls completely out of light during a certain line read and then times it so that he will land in the dark at that moment. For me, as a director, I feel that we're literally in sync and we're making it together.

And as you watch Bruce coming in and out of the light, you can get a tone of what he's feeling at that exact moment—and then it'll change. Because the character's constantly reflecting and judging himself. That's hard to do in a music video, because you can set up one tone, a happy moment... but to play back and forth from that was the real challenge of "The Wrestler." At times in the song, it's like he's at a bar and he's laughing at himself, and then other times, he's having a real reflective moment. Or a devastating one. So, Bruce and I played with that in the cutting room. You see him smiling for half of a line; you see him looking dead into the camera like he's confessing; you see him in total silhouette. All those tonal shifts were not easy to get and make it feel seamless, because you're constantly shifting gears.

But you can't create something like that just in the cutting. It's the performance. It's that person lingering into the camera that way and taking a beat and then delivering the line. It's the magic in performance.

And then they brought you into the studio for the *Working on a Dream* DVD—is that a completely different experience, shooting for a documentary?

What I was interested in doing, I wanted to show the building of the album—all documentary moments, sure—but do it in a way that would be presented in the music video form. The 30-minute film is in that place

between the two genres, the documentary and music videos. There are straight moments of pure documentary, and then when you get to the song, it goes more into music video, so it can stand on its own.

But it wasn't music video that was recreated. There's no moment at all in that 30-minute film that isn't a real moment. All those shots are Bruce actually making the album.

So, there's no lip-syncing...

There's no lip-syncing, there's nothing like that. I would have to go through and sync up my footage and figure out which takes he used so it would fall in-sync to the final album. It all came from the real footage of them making the album. When you look at the *Working on a Dream* film, that is Bruce in the studio. That's Bruce in street clothes. That's not a video shoot with makeup and lights and an artist. That's the moment. And no one's paying attention to me—they're making an album, and everyone's really excited by the process, and the last thing anyone really cares about is the guy in the corner with the camera.

What is your crew like for something like *Working on a Dream?*

Working on a Dream was very small. It was a five-man crew; there were times when there would only be two or three of us in the studio, so what you see is really me, another cameraman and a sound man. It was that small, so that it would not interrupt the process of the recording.

Other than *Blood Brothers*, your docs are really the only things that have let us in to that world.

It's *amazing* to watch the process—particularly because I had worked on the *Born to Run* doc so intensely, and I saw Bruce working, again, with the band in the same passionate way. So I had this history with *Born to Run* where I got to see footage of them back in '75 working together, and then here we are with that same intensity again. It's a strange feeling of *déjà vu*—especially the relationship with Jon, where you see that they've been having this creative friendship for so long.

I tried to include a lot of those moments for the fans to see. For example, Bruce playing the demos to the band. That's the way it unfolds, that's the first time they hear it. His collaboration with Jon and the E Street Band... I tried to include as many small moments that, to me, as filmmaker, say, "That's what it would be like to be there at the moment."

It's a wild experience to go through, seeing it in archival film from '75 and then a week later be there and making a new album. There's been a lot of change, but the core things haven't changed: the band is really passionate in the studio, and Bruce is really focused and dedicated to that moment. It all feels familiar in the sense of the approach to the work and the value of the work.

What *has* changed since 1975?

Certainly in terms of getting the sound he was looking for—it's obvious that it was not like *Born to Run*, where they really had to chase that. It went faster than the footage I saw in *Born to Run*, because they were able to get the sound. Things were articulated and captured quickly. They're all obviously much more comfortable at this point with the use of the studio, dealing with background vocals or a guitar sound or things like that. There aren't tons of hours of struggling the way they did on *Born to Run* just for, you know, a certain sound or whether or not to use the strings. Or the "Jungleland" solo—things are not like that.

And part of that is just Bruce not feeling the weight of the world on him like he did back in '75.

And then he goes and plays the Super Bowl. No pressure there. How did your *Super Bowl Journal* film come together?

It wasn't planned. But of course, none of these projects would happen without JLM [Jon Landau Management], and this one started with Jon and Barbara [Carr] inviting me to just park a car, to be there for the

Super Bowl. I said, "Well, should I bring a crew? Should I bring the camera?" and they're like, "No, no, no." I said, "Do you mind if I just bring my camera? A small camera—just me?" And they said, "No problem." It was the best decision ever because I caught moments that, if I had a crew, I never would have. The reality would not be the same.

It's amazing that you essentially had coverage for his whole journal, with just you and just one camera. Working your footage in with what Bruce wrote about the day—first of all, were there moments putting that together when you thought, "If only I had something..." or did things kind of just fit together?

You know, you always have those moments as an editor. Between editor and director, you always go back and forth yelling at yourself for different things. The director praises yourself for 30 seconds, and the editor yells at you the next cut.

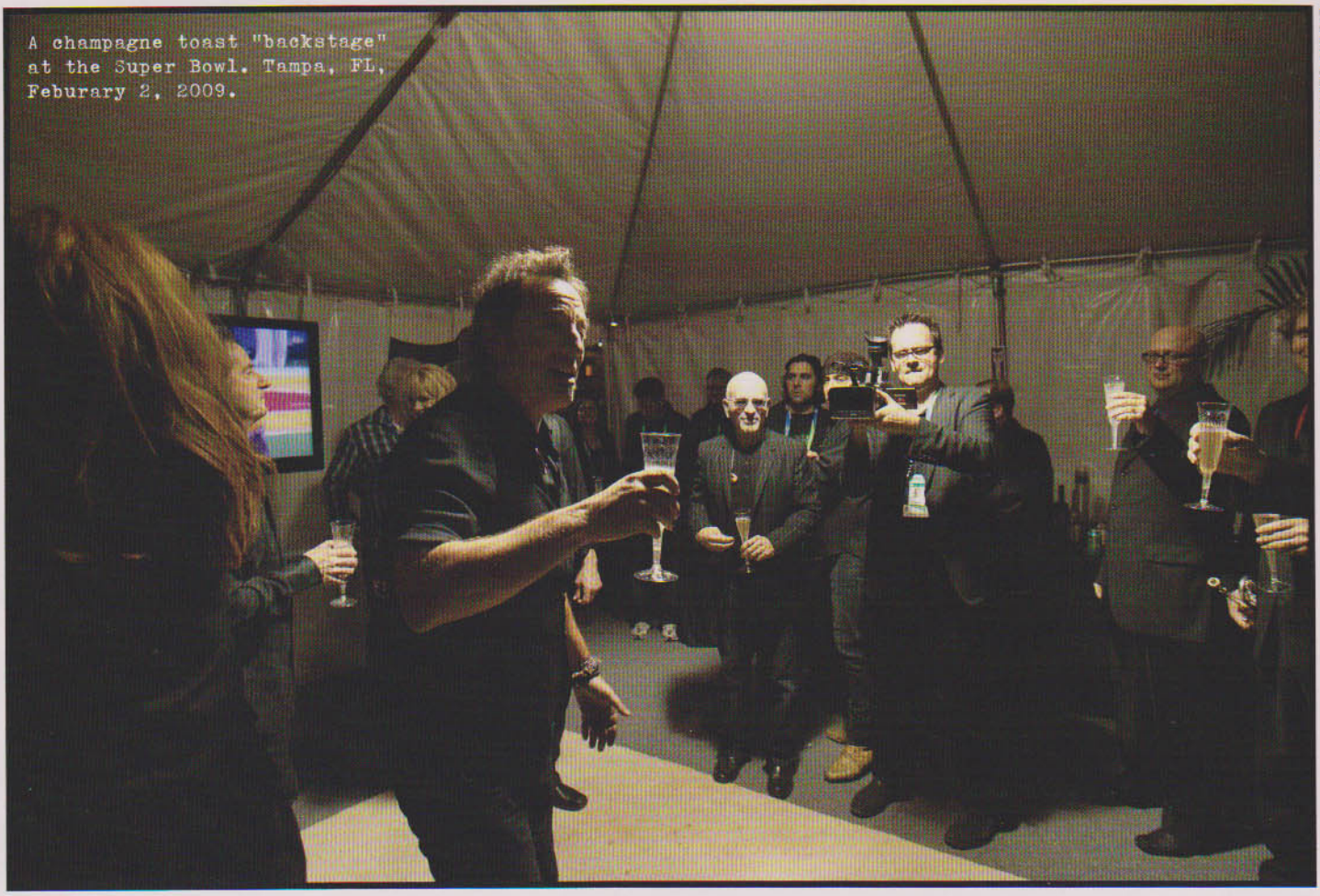
But I had NFL footage to support it; outtakes from the NFL gave this another reality. I had the line cut of the performance which was aired on TV, I had all the original cameras, and I also got stuff from all the cameramen who shot the game and decided to shoot the performance anyway. Their footage was great. Not only do we get these fantastic camera angles, but it showed the crane, it showed the crowd in a revealing way, and also it also helped show Bruce's point of view at times. I also incorporated my own footage shot during the performance. But all that raw NFL footage was incredible to have. The mistakes—the things that you'd think are "errors" if you're directing the halftime show—are sometimes the things that convey the reality. And those things, that beauty, that's what I look out for in the cutting room.

There were things that I just recorded, never thinking that they would turn out to be so important—like the conversations with [cameraman and knee-slide victim] Mike Colucci.

How cool to have that on film.

Yeah, it was pure luck, grabbing that. I mean, George Travis and the road crew keep me informed so I can try to be there for the

STILL FROM "THE WRESTLER"



A champagne toast "backstage" at the Super Bowl. Tampa, FL, Feburary 2, 2009.

DANNY CLINCH PHOTO

moment... but nobody knew that moment would matter in the way that it did. It's also the benefit of running with a small camera, just hanging out. So when Bruce talks to Mike Colucci, I'm basically just standing there—not with a camera on my shoulder. I'm just standing there with a small camera pointed up. And that becomes a key exchange for the film that obviously played out to be something bigger later. Sometimes you get lucky.

In terms of the story, what Bruce wrote must have dictated a lot for you as a filmmaker.

More than ever, I was trying to get Bruce's point of view across. That was yet another new challenge, and a very different story to tell. When Bruce says, "I'm on top of the piano. 1-2-3, I drop in front the microphone. I'm bending back..." I wanted to get deep inside on how it would feel for *him* to be on top of that piano. There was the conversation about what it felt like for him going out there with the crowd cheering. So I slowed everything down and then examined it. And I thought about Bruce saying, "It's an amazing feeling to lean back and look up into the sky," which he wrote about later in his journal, and that became my key moment for that film.

So I was able to really take his point of view—you feel his heartbeat, and things are slowed down in a way that I've never done with any of the other films. You hear his inner vibes—like, "I don't know much about football." And it's all how I was interpreting Bruce's writing—because again, the film wasn't planned. That was me going there with a camera.

"Wrecking Ball" has a similar feel. Was that just you and a camera again? Or did you have a crew?

It was just me with a camera, yeah. It wasn't a planned video shoot, it was just me being around and watching them rehearse this, just hanging out on stage. Basically, it was a great idea by Jon to drop in and see the rehearsals, drop in to Giants Stadium to see if there's anything there. So it really just came about from being at the soundcheck.

I bet I know what the "one shot" was for this one...

Where he looks up at the bleachers. That shot just happened. Between run-throughs of "Wrecking Ball," Bruce was looking around the empty stadium, and I saw that he was waving to the people above, and the workers... again, I'm not "making a video" at that point, I'm just in the corner. But when I saw him look up like that, and then saw him perform this song, I started to put together this storyline. And I wound up looking at that one shot again and again.

And I loved playing back and forth with realities, from him pointing to an empty stadium to cutting to the crowd. The whole idea would be to get across that sadness—the ending of a chapter. I went back to the '81 footage, you know, The River tour...

Whose footage was that from '81?

That's from the vault. And '75 footage. I wanted to try to capture the tour at that moment, and it was also just fun to play with footage from different times, black and white, different periods, playing with him at rehearsal, and at the live show. While working with the music and, of course, the words—the story.

Once again, it was a great use of the internet, a very compelling thing to get that new song out there. Now, do you edit the brucespringsteen.net [concert clips]?

No, a lot of that is line cuts. I would say the majority is just line cuts. Occasionally I'll tweak something. I think if you look at the live concerts now, what's shown on BS.net, the wide shots and the language of it—it's completely different than what we did with *Live in New York* and *Barcelona*. I think these concerts are being covered differently. They're always advancing in telling the story and capturing the band in a new way. Chris Hilson, who directs the screens, does an amazing job—and he is somebody that doesn't always get lot of attention that way. He's so in-sync with Bruce live, if you think

about it. If Bruce changes the setlist, he's aware of the tonal qualities needed to get that song in what coverage. Chris really is connected to the band and the live experience in a unique way.

So it's all been a process. *Live in New York* was their first concert—Chris and George Travis brought me onto the Bruce team to work on that—and I think we've advanced a lot since then.

Which brings us to the *Hyde Park* film, *London Calling,* which Hilson directed and you first cut for VH1. And that must have been a pretty different experience, in terms of the kind of footage you came away with.

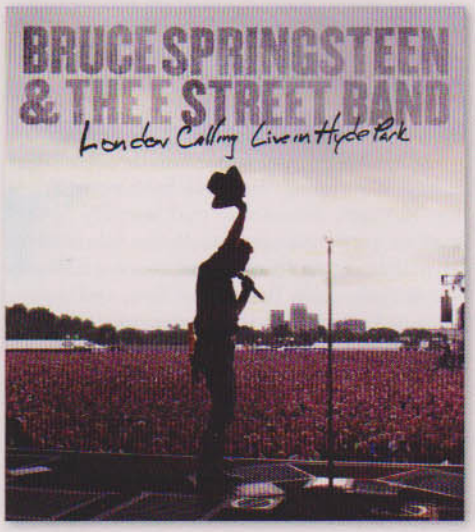
You know, I think each one these concerts has a different feeling, and I think each one of them went for a different style. If you look at *Live in New York*, it had a steady cam—it's kind of even. That was really the beginning of HD and trying to capture the band live. Each concert cuts differently. Each concert had a different approach down to the lighting, the cutting, the directing. They're all different experiences. They're all different approaches of telling the story.

The cameras—this is the first show where I had wides to actually show the lighting of the stage. So you could pull back and say, this is what actually goes on with the lights at this point. Watch the end of "Dancing in the Dark," where the camera pulls *all* the way back. *Live in Dublin,* I didn't have wides that way. That gave me the ability to stay focused on the small details and then pull way out and see the overhead, the gods' point of view, the crowd.

At the same time, we're so close on stage, we're able to see the roadie getting the guitar ready for the next song. With this concert, you get not only the audience, you get the background. You literally get the chaos of backstage.

Like the "errors" in the NFL footage you talked about.

Again, these are all deliberate choices that come from Bruce—where we kept that style of filmmaking, and also in the cutting room,



we kept that raw feeling. There's a beauty in this rawness. You realize that the beauty of this show was that raw energy, watching him lead the band. You see him giving song directions, changing the setlist, telling Clarence and Steven the next song—he's yelling, "The Night! The Night!"

And at times the camera will shake, or the focus will rack, and to me, those imperfections are beautiful. I could easily cut around that at times. But the live experience is not perfect. And when you embrace that, then when you cut to Charlie, you don't cut to Charlie at the moment he's playing the chords—you cut to a second of him *prepping* to play the chords. All of a sudden you create that world where you're let in. You're let in to the stage environment in a closer way.

How many cameras were there?

There were 11 or 12. It was the first time we really had so many cameras capturing those angles—and it's all Chris Hilson. As an editor, I have so many different choices of where I could go at any one moment, a million choices that are really exciting.

Not overwhelming?

Well, from day one, Bruce has kept the focus on the music. So even though I have 12 beautiful shots, you look at what's going to be invisible—what's not going to take you out of the moment. And with Chris Hilson as a director, I'm extremely lucky, because I get those 12 beautiful shots.

On a very basic level, what is Hilson doing as the show is going along?

He's doing the screens, every night. But he's also directing the cameras—he's on the headset. I'm not composing shots, I'm not saying "cut." I'll go back and look at the monitors, to check things out as it's going, but during the live show, Chris is directing it. So there will be times when he's on Soozie, but then he pans off to something else. As an editor, you might want a few more frames, you might want something else, but that's part of the process between editor and director, where you work with the material that's given to you. And also it's very rare that I don't have something with Chris directing.

Is Chris doing different things at a show like this than he is on a regular night?

Oh, definitely. More cameras, different coverage.

So even compared to a stadium show, he's got far more cameras here.

Far more cameras, and he's directing all of them. Way in the back, there's a camera on a stand behind Max. This camera would go up and down, and would be able to get a lower shot of Max, but then also this high above shot. It gave me a variety of options.

So if you can imagine, while the show is going on, he's like, "Camera four, go to a medium," and "Pan off of Soozie."... He's like an air traffic controller.

So as he's doing that, who's making decisions about what's going up on the video screen?

He is. And he's simultaneously working on getting the wide shots in there and also giving me a variety of shots that'll tell the story of the night. It's a huge stage, long shots, wide shots, the crane and the audience members... it's a totally different view.

And the audience is key here—it's outside, it's daylight, the crowd is huge, and you've got the cameras to show it.

Right. You think about *Live in New York,* there weren't really any shots of audience participation. *Hyde Park* was a different challenge because all of a sudden, I was incorporating audience in a different way.

I think that's a big reason that this feels unlike anything we've seen before. Even though a lot of the songs are ones we've had on DVD already, that's just on paper.

"Badlands," to me, is a completely different "Badlands" because of the festival crowd, and having the song in the second slot. Or "Lonesome Day." You compare *Barcelona*'s "Lonesome Day," and it's a completely different experience from watching the crowd be *part of it* in Hyde Park. It's almost a "Born to Run" moment, where it's become part of the consciousness of the crowd; on *Barcelona* it's still kind of new. It's like watching a *Hammersmith* "Born to Run" versus a *Live in New York* "Born to Run." People had time to take the song into their lives.

And there were generations of fans in there—you see all the different ages in this crowd, different generations. There's a guy in the crowd singing along—you see him in "Working in a Dream." That guy in the blue shirt, I love that shot, and in the next shot, he turns around and he's singing to the crowd. So you have those moments when you can actually, in one shot like that, convey that sense of community and the concert experience—where you're able to follow along with Bruce but pick out one individual in a crowd of thousands and see his experience and connect as a viewer. I think that that's the beauty of this for me, literally going down to a detail but also being able to pull back out.

It was a real conscious decision, again, starting from Bruce, to get the band in a festival environment. Bruce has an amazing understanding of the language of film and cutting and these kinds of choices; with this one, the band is represented in the cutting, and the crowd is represented in the cutting. That community and that concert experience, as best as you can, is constantly being told in the cutting.

Talking about the cuts, there's some crossfading on "Jungleland"—at least that's the only place I noticed it...

Once. "Jungleland." That's the only time I used it. And it's warranted there, because the emotion is so strong you want all the elements shown. Straight cuts everywhere else.

If you look at *Barcelona*, there are dissolves in it, which is your more traditional concert cutting. Starting with *Dublin*, I just realized that things felt better with the music with a straight cut. I enjoy straight cuts more than dissolves.

Straight cuts, for me, give the storytelling a harder feel. A dissolve can soften the impact. One shot can easily dissolve to another, but I would rather work off of movement—like as the camera moves back in one shot, you cut to Bruce moving in on the next shot. I would rather work with movement than with space, which is what you're doing when you dissolve. Working off of his energy, his movement, the movement of the cameras.

You've talked about Jon Landau as being a fan of film, but how does he see things as the process goes along, what is his input?

Jon's been involved with Bruce on all these different projects, and I think they've had this strong dialogue that's been going on for 30-plus years. He describes it as a "conversation," and it's exactly that. Jon had some great moments for me where he's referenced how important it is to let a shot linger. When you look at Bruce's E Street Band speech, I had that, and I had cut away to different parts. And Jon said, "let's just look at the close-up." And I put that up, and all of us looked at it, and it was a great moment. Because just staying on that close-up, you got more power than any cut could ever produce.

Bruce also understands the power of the image, and how we color correct it, and how it's lit. *Live in Dublin* had a very distinct look, and it was a darker film. And if you look at that live concert experience compared to this, it's just the complete opposite—night and day. Which makes it really exciting as a filmmaker.

Night and day—quite literally.

Exactly. No one knew what this day would bring in terms of light, but it's magical light. It's got the combination of the beautiful sunny daylight and stage lighting. So what happens from my perspective is that things pop in a way we've never seen. You're seeing detail in that crowd that's amazing—you're seeing expressions and excitement—and also you're seeing the dirtiness and the beauty of that rock 'n' roll stage—which is the cables, and the cases, and all that. It's not lost in any stage lighting or a night environment.

And with that transition from day into night, something magical was happening. By the time you get to "Jungleland," it's just spectacular; we're at twilight, and it's beautiful light, Clarence is doing his solo… I was there, and it was unbelievable. "Jungleland" was such a joy to cut. You couldn't plan that kind of lighting. This is when things happen, and you just get out of the way.

It's the "magic hour," lightwise.

And sometimes when you have those moments in the live experience, you just pray that the camera is as loyal to the moment that you experienced. Because you can't always capture it. Or you come back, and it's just different. But with Hyde Park, for it me it translated to such a higher level. Because my perspective of being on the side of the stage was intense, but it *really* was beautiful when I saw the footage of the camera sweeping over the crowd, and the night sky going down.

That crane, that camera that went overhead and floated above the stage, that was amazing. I could just let that go for a long period of time and wouldn't have to cut to get to another moment—it was all happening in camera. For the first time, I could let the camera go for a long period of time in a wide shot that felt like it captured the band when you're watching them live—and I love that.

When you're watching a show live, you're taking it in and you're literally doing your own selective editing. But you don't always go to the details, unless you go to the screens. And with this cut, we were really aware of the power of the wide shot, and the power of seeing the band in some of these crane shots above. Things are unfolding in front of you. The camera will float across the stage, and you might get a whole verse in that pass. And that language brings you back to the concert experience in a different way.

And those wide shots really let us see the whole thing in context, too, like the fact that he has to reach so far to get to the crowd—or run so fast.

Man, those stairs! The stairs literally are like a character in the concert film. The first time he goes down them, I kept on that medium wide, and you see him going and going and going and going… and then by the end of this song, he's like oh my God, *the stairs [laughs]*. And he plays that a couple of times where he's exhausted, and it becomes part of the show—and that's the spontaneity.

I could have made the stairs two steps on camera, and not focused on it, but again, this comes from Bruce—we're embracing the raw quality of not only the show and the inner-workings of the band and background, but we're staying true to the festival environment.

And the festival environment was this: it was a wider stage, it wasn't their stage, and for him to get to the audience, he had to work harder. And I love that the cameras caught that. You see him go across the ramp side to side, *and* he has to be back up on stage on a certain cue. I love that determination to remain connected to the audience.

You see it again later in "Born to Run." In the editing room I would think, God, he's got to make that trek to connect to the audience after singing *all these songs*. He could have just bypassed the moment with the crowd. But you see him go down those stairs, and you see him make that happen, and back up for the cue. To me, I love when you see in the film in an abstract way Bruce's dedication to the desire to communicate to the audience. And it comes out in unexpected ways—it could be the stairs, it could be stopping and reconnecting with a fan, pointing at a fan…

If you look at "Sunny Day," the cameras caught for the first time a shot/reverse shot. Which means Bruce is pointing at someone in the crowd, and then I would get a reverse shot of who he's pointing to—Bruce's POV. And you see the eye contact. There's a moment with a little girl waving, the girl with the flag, and it's great to have that shot/reverse shot, because it tells that story: what Bruce is seeing at the moment.

Finding those moments—what's the process for reviewing the footage? Are you looking at all 11 or 12 shots at the same time and making choices that way? Logistically, how does that work?

I don't cut with all cameras running, because I would miss the small moments. And the small moments, you need the concentration of watching dailies—an individual take.

Coming from a background of narrative and documentary cutting, that's how you approach dailies: you look at a take, a single take, and you focus on a line reading. Bruce's stuff, I approach it the same way. In the live environment, they watch 12 cameras, and they make calls on the fly. What happens with approaching it individually is that I get a better sense of what was happening in the moment with the band.

For instance, I'm watching Steven's camera, and at the end of the stairs thing I see Steven laugh. I think that's a great moment: Steven's laughing. But then I see that Max has been watching the whole thing, and Max does the transition from concentration to laughter. That's actually better than the Steven moment. I can use Steven second; Max will go first. Max will tell the viewer we're in the middle of a song and something funny has happened to shift the gears. If I were doing all 11 cameras, I'd miss that detail.

It also gives you the opportunity to not cut solely based on the music. You cut on the environment, what's happening at the second. Sometimes you give the satisfaction of cutting on a musical moment, and sometimes you play with it… you *think* it's gonna happen at that moment, but it happens a little bit before. Or it happens a little bit after. A cut is based on movement, a cut is based on emotion, and a cut is based on music. What I always try to do is keep the music up front, and then the emotion right behind it.

Bob Clearmountain mixed the sound.

Bob Clearmountain—unbelievable. The sound is stunning. Bob has been with Bruce for 30 years. Something that is really important to get across is that Bruce has a team of people working on these concert films. It starts really with Bruce and Jon, and then it goes to George Travis. I know guys like that don't really go out there and talk to anybody, but they have to be acknowledged in the process for me.

George Travis makes all this happen for the live shows, he's the executive producer of this concert, organizing all the cameras and the shoot and producing. Jeff Ravitz is

"It's magical light...the combination of the beautiful sunny daylight and stage lighting." London, June 28, 2009.

JO LOPEZ PHOTO

another important detail in talking about the concert. He designs all the lighting and stage design. And then John Cooper doing the sound recording, Chris Hilson directing... looking at the whole structure and development of these concert films, those guys really need mentioning. I wouldn't have all these treasures to play with in the editing room if I wasn't part of their team, you know what I mean?

And Bob mixed this to picture?

Right—he gets cuts from me, and he will be watching picture and mix to picture. So that when I cut to Nils, there are subtle differences. The guitar would be brought up ever so slightly.

Well it's funny you say that because in "Badlands" I was noticing...

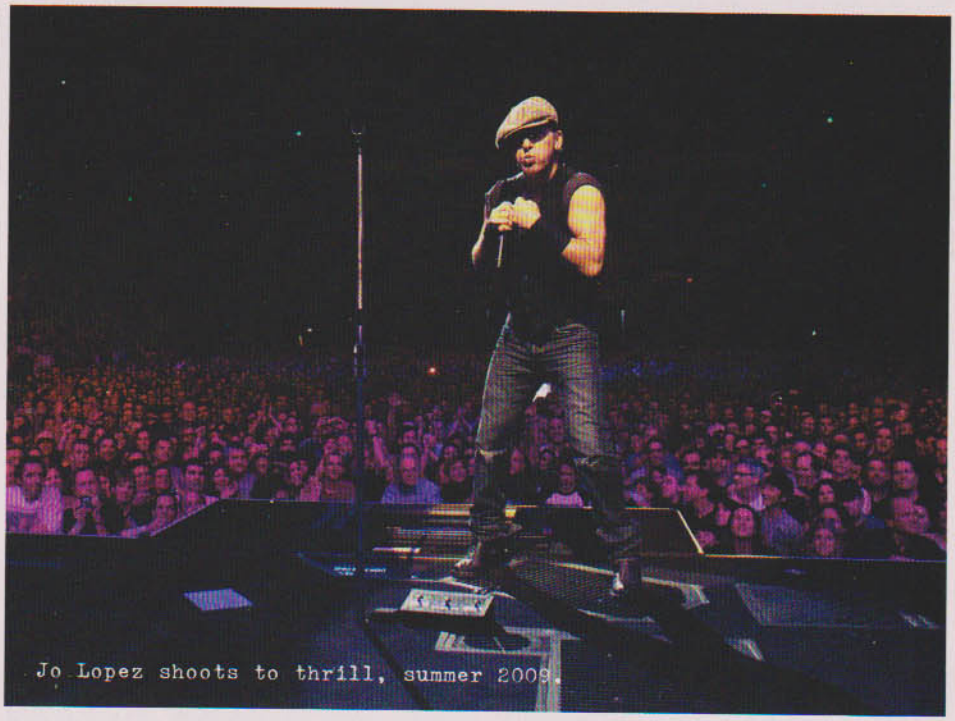
The guitar?

Actually, the tambourine. You have a shot where you're looking at Cindy [Mizelle]'s profile, and out at the crowd.

Yeah, I know the shot.

And so I see, okay, Cindy's playing tambourine... and all of a sudden I'm hearing the tambourine separated nice and loud and clear.

Right. Sometimes I like to just focus on an individual instrument that's not actually the key moment. You focus on Garry, and you hear the bass more—your brain actually pulls things out of the mix. But Bob subtly enhances that, too.



Jo Lopez shoots to thrill, summer 2009.

It's funny you bring up the tambourine, because so many times in concerts, they cut to the tambourine, it's not mic'ed! But here, right, it's dead-on. Thank you, Bob Clearmountain.

And going back to Steven laughing at the end of "Out in the Street," knowing that was part of the visual focus, that's part of the

magic Bob does—you actually *hear the giggle.*

Bob is working with the cut. If you don't mix to picture, you can give the illusion that the cutting is in another world. The cut and the mix can be fighting against each other. So as a picture editor I can't wait to get Bob's mixes, because I spend all this time cutting with the board mixes, give it to Bob, get a mix back, and then all of a sudden my pictures... it's just like, oh my God! That crowd is so big in that shot! It changes the shot perspective.

He makes sure that we can hear what you're showing.

Bob Clearmountain is essential to the DVD experience for this exact reason. Bruce works with Bob song by song, too. It's not like I do the picture cutting, we get the mix, make the DVD and it's done. You get many versions of mixes. You get changes. I'll send it back to Bob: this song has 15 new shots. And he'll adjust his mix. So picture might change, or sound might change as Bruce is working with it.

And we can't forget Kevin Buell! How about that big guitar throw to Kevin across the chasm?

Did you catch Kevin's guitar in the menu?

No—where?

I wanted to get all these elements of the experience when you go to the show. And the first thing on the menu is the crowd clapping, that sound of waiting for the show to begin. So if you were at home, you would feel that kind of anticipation. There's no music going on. And then when it goes to the sound menu, you hear Kevin doing his guitar strums. Go to the stereo and surround options, and you'll hear four or five Kevin strums. And of course those are the signatures of being at the show and waiting.

I'm just going off my experience of the show. And memories. I think it's really important to remember experiences I had of the shows I saw before I worked with Bruce. And that's key to me. That's what makes me remember that the crowd sound before a show was really exciting. Because I've seen so many shows now...

How many shows did you see before you started working for Bruce?

Well, I saw a lot of shows before, because I grew up in New Jersey. I grew up in Point Pleasant, New Jersey—it's part of your DNA at that point. It's part of your SAT requirements, to see at least so many shows. My first tour was The River, when I was 18.

The music has been with me for a long time, and I draw from the experiences living there and listening as a fan when making these projects. You have to always return to a place where you remember the energy and excitement you had throughout the different Bruce shows you saw over the years. Or Kevin coming out—the rituals.

The menus are really exciting for me in that they're very different. Using [Clarence's sax tech] Jo Lopez's photography... it's a different look. He's shooting these stills that have amazing, sharp detail. And like the cameras for the DVD, Jo's lens is capturing the feeling of being on stage. With the other photography, as great as Danny [Clinch] or anybody else is, Jo's work is unique because he's allowed to be up on stage.

Though Danny has taken a lot of shots from back by Max's riser—I think he's referred to that as his "spot."

True. Jo's are less impressionistic. There's that clarity. It's very different for me, and it feels completely in sync with the rest of this show. So I got to use those images for the menus; and like the DVD packaging, it gives you a sampling of the European tour. You get these shots of the sky looking so beautiful and so epic in these stadiums. And then the end credits, Bruce had the idea of just working with the stills. So we cut together this sequence.

So for a concert film, how often are you sitting down with Bruce and looking at this stuff together, or how often are you sending him stuff?

All the time. The whole time. I can't always sit down physically with him, but it's constant. The moment it becomes a project, there's communication with him and Jon about every detail.

What would the typical feedback be? Is it like, "I don't like the look on my face in that shot," or...

The music is the focus. I can't think of an example of a cosmetic thing. Here's an example: sometimes a line can be on camera that takes away from the intensity of the line delivery. You can pull back on a line delivery and get a bigger impact.

Much like you talked about with "Jersey Devil."

Right. If it's a key line for like "The River" or "Badlands," you have the choice of going in for that extreme close-up; that plays one emotion. But if you imagine the line is a really powerful line, it might be too much to see it that close. It might be more powerful back.

There's a moment in "Johnny 99" where Bruce is playing directly to the camera. We don't see him do that very much at all.

He doesn't ever do that.

Acknowledging the camera—I was going to ask if he was doing that in other shots and you just didn't use them.

No, that was a spontaneous moment. The cameraman crept out, crossing the line of the stage, and you see Bruce seeing him and going "C'mon, c'mon, c'mon"—challenging him in a funny way. So the cameraman went all the way out on stage, and after the guitar solo, Bruce nods him back into his place. It's a great little moment of Bruce addressing the crowd as intimately as possible by going right up to the camera, but also a dialogue between the cameraman and Bruce. It's totally spontaneous.

As opposed "Living in the Future" on the *Magic* tour, where he would address the camera in the same way each time.

Yeah, it's more like this is a festival moment. And if you look at the middle of that song, there was a great breakdown between him and Steven that played out differently in the festival environment. Yeah, they did their riff thing back and forth, but that day it was played really for the crowd, to challenge the crowd—he's using the camera to keep that connection close. Because when you stand on the side of the stage like that, it's a *sea* that you can't comprehend.

Just so I'm clear, why were there so many more cameras on a night like this, if it wasn't planned for release?

Well remember, the festival already had a deal to put some songs on television, because they do that every year. Not Sony or JLM, but the festival. So they had something already set up, before we even saw the venue. But it wasn't as if something had to come from this. When you try to force something like that, it doesn't happen.

Is that what happened with the Boston Devils & Dust shows? Bruce knew they were being filmed for a possible project, and it affected the performance?

I think that, besides Boston, Bruce covers each show to document it. Sometimes the addition of cameras becomes known and then it becomes a "filmed show," but the reality is that at every show, there's some sort of documentation going on. It might not be as many cameras, but if it becomes a magical show, there's a possibility of getting something out there.

Looking at Hyde Park compared with all the other stuff from this tour—Glastonbury, whatever else you had in the can—at what point did you know, okay, we really have something in this?

That night, everybody was really excited about what was happening on the screens. And really, that night, Chris's direction was so great, and he was so in sync with the show. So that night I'm watching the show unfold, both as the live experience and in the edited version by Chris, but also I get to go back and see 12 monitors. When you stand in front of 12 monitors, it's *exciting:* oh my God, he's got that close-up, he's got that crane shot…

So it was immediate, then.

From my perspective. That night I felt like, wow, this is looking really beautiful. But then again, it takes on a completely different life once you cut it together. And it's also dependent on what Bruce is looking for—because if it's an amazing night and the shots look great, it doesn't really mean that it's going to make the mark for a DVD. That's actually not enough. The music is the consideration.

So at the time, there was no deliberate plan to make this anything. The filmmaking… we were just there to capture it. We didn't know at the time this was going to be something. That's the beauty of this performance. It's not a performance for the camera. Bruce's performance is for the crowd. And you really see that. The cameras and the filmmaking process really take a backseat.

You cut the songs for the original TV broadcast of some of this, right?

Right. I flew to London, went to the show, and cut it. But when I went back to work on the DVD, I went back to everything again. I recut "Jungleland"…

What influenced different decisions that you made, going back? You had more time? Or did you learn things after doing one cut?

I took in the whole show. So I knew energy-wise where I was in the show, rather than an isolated event. The approach to this thing is linear—we're not working off of chapters. In the cutting, and in the discussion of the songs, and the whole show. It's not like, "let's look at 'Dancing in the Dark.'" If you're going to look at a song, you're going to go back two songs, and let it play.

With Bruce there's no fast-forward. It's a linear experience. It's not like, "Cut 'Lonesome Day' and let me look at that." "Cut 'Rosalita' and let me look at that." When we watch the cut, we *watch the cut.* And that's three hours.

And how often do you do that?

As many times as necessary. I've been on a plane, working with him on the plane, and we've watched the whole cut. *After* a show. So when you think about Bruce's involvement and focus with the details, I've seen him perform an amazing show and then sat next to him on the plane and worked out details by watching the whole show.

Man, your level of familiarity with this performance must be just out of this world *[laughs]*…

Yeah *[laughs]*. The point that I get to is that there's no end to the day. There's no "I'm not going to think about it any more today." It's constant. And you're constantly referencing and developing. I don't stop at 7:00 and *[dusting hands off]*, "That was the Brian Fallon cut for today…"

As for Bruce, how unusual is it for an artist to be involved on that level with a project like this?

I have had no other experience like this. Nothing else comes close to this, where the artist is aware of this many details and understands the process, but also learns with you. When we first started with *Live in New York,* it was the beginning of HD; we've learned together since then. From my own experience in cutting, and seeing other experiences around me as I'm making the Bruce projects, sometimes the artist just comes in at the end. It's mixed, and they hear the mix with the picture cut, and it's a few choices changed, or cosmetic-type things. But with this one, like all other Bruce projects, everything is discussed and thought about, throughout.

And do you get the sense that it's as much or more him enjoying the creative process as it is controlling what's out there?

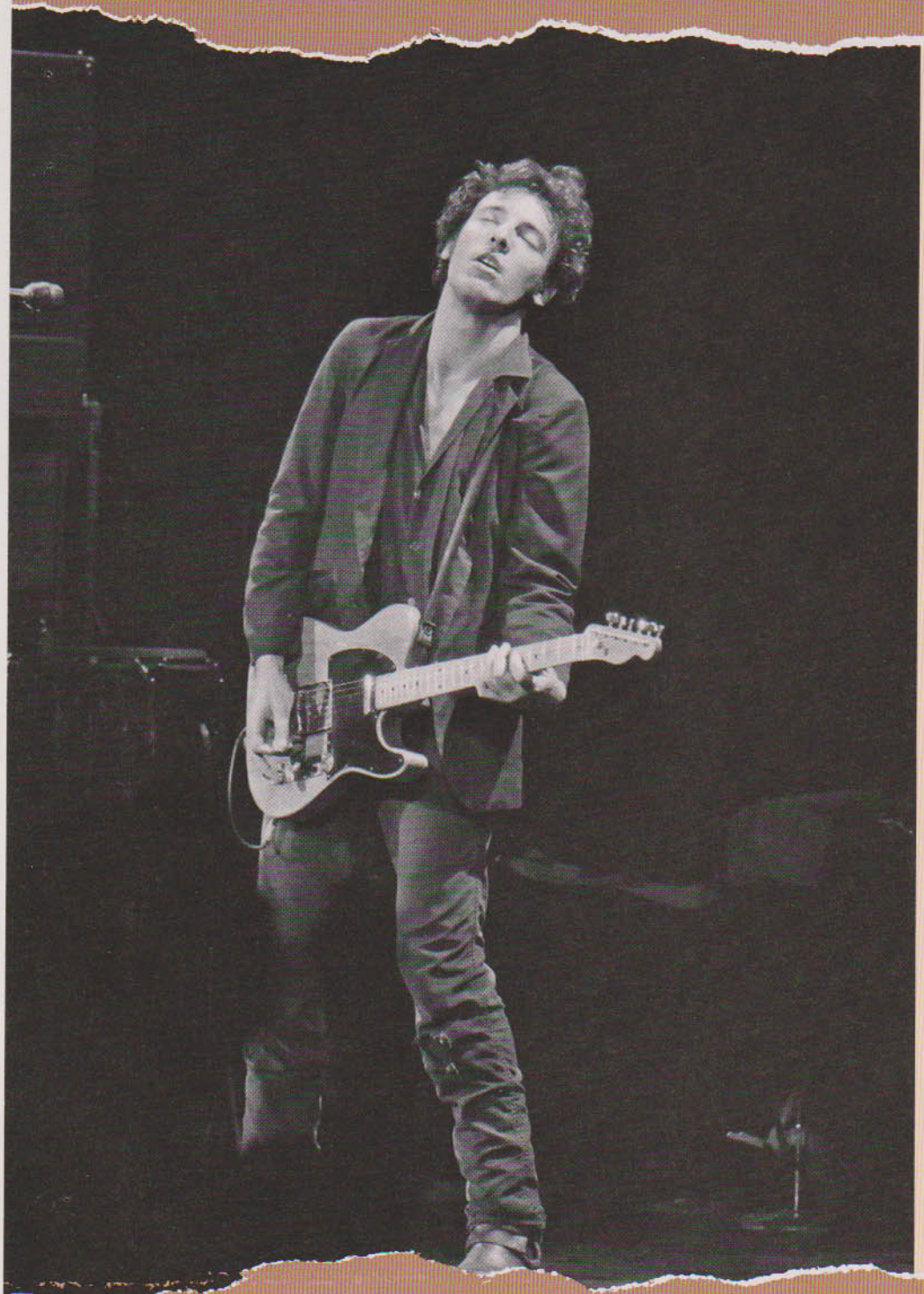
I don't know exactly what the record making process is, but I have a feeling that sometimes the DVDs are no different. Things are explored, details are examined… and it's not only to control, it's really to explore the process. I look at the experience of *Hyde Park,* and I have no reference to this at all in my journey with Bruce. The direction that he gave me, there's nothing familiar.

Cutting "No Surrender" that way, with the spontaneity of the two of them onstage, and cutting over to Bruce during a certain line where he's looking at Brian with such happiness… when to keep on the two-shot where it's Bruce watching him, and when to go on a single shot… it makes the job completely different. Every time we do a concert, I never expect to hold on to what the last journey was. Because, like the documentaries or the smaller films, like the making of albums, you're never doing the same thing twice. Because if you follow the music, then you realize: it's a different journey. It's a different chapter. There's no *Born to Run 2.*

Special thanks to Jonathan Pont and Greg Linn for their participation in the Hyde Park *conversation.*

The Devil & the Darkness

Behind the Scenes with THOM ZIMNY, Part II



FRANK STEFANKO PHOTO

Backstreets: The Promise **documentary really is, as one of my colleagues put it, "a revelation." We've talked before about your emphasis on storytelling, on finding the story, and I'm curious to know how you thought about the story that you wanted to tell on this doc. Because part of what's interesting to me is it's** *not* **the story of how the record came together. That's not the story here.**

Thom Zimny: Right. It's really about the creative process. I also think that Bruce's interviews are really powerful, where he discusses what it takes—and what it took him, what he had to acknowledge in himself—to grow up and become a man. Those themes I found really interesting, too, and they come together to create the story.

How did that take shape? Where do you start?

My thought process in making the doc was that I wanted to tell a story of growing up and the struggles to create—to go beyond a "making of" and hit upon bigger themes. Early on, one of our first interviews was done at his house, and it was a quiet, rainy day. There was a certain tone to that interview. I remember he started the beginning of "Darkness on the Edge of Town," the acoustic version, and I wound up looking at the dailies and playing that over and over again. Just the first couple of lines—that's how the film starts.

It's kind of a weird process to describe. I go through the interviews, and I break out everything. And then I make index cards that have the themes, and I literally walk around the room playing the tracks, and build an edit on paper, and I move these cards around. That frees me up: I stop thinking about what I want to do, and I get into an emotional tone, because I'm listening to the music. Most times, I'm listening to the music raw—meaning I'm not listening to the finished songs.

You have the actual tracks from the sessions.

Yeah. If you watch the *Darkness* film, the whole soundtrack is built on the outtakes, and the outtakes are stripped-down versions

By CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS

of the songs. I have the audio stripped down, and it's one of the biggest things that I am most grateful for in my collaboration with Bruce—that he trusts me to work with the tracks.

So I would listen to "Darkness on the Edge of Town" with bass, guitar, and a little bit of piano. I would create that mix, and I'd give it a name for myself, and it started to create a tone. I'd have that as a track, and then I'd deal with my index cards on, say, Jon and Bruce's relationship. You look at all the quotes that you have, and you start to feed your head with the material, so that when you see the archival footage, you are responding to a story that is deep inside you. The decisions are almost unconscious. You start living the film in your head.

And when you start to watch the archival material, you have two sets of eyes: one set of eyes is just looking at the footage of what's really happening, and then the other set is looking at the story that's in your head and in your heart. So there might be a moment where the reality is the shot, just Jon and Bruce standing together, but you realize that that shot of Jon and Bruce standing together could represent their friendship, because that's a theme you've been working on with your index cards and with the soundtrack that you're building. Then it comes together: "I'm going to take this quote of Max, where he's talking about Jon and Bruce, and I'm going to take this quote of Bruce talking about Jon's influence, and I'm going to marry it to this sound that I'm hearing."

So the audio was really a big part of it for you, creatively.

Yeah, and that I take very, very, seriously. *Born to Run* was the beginning of scoring the doc with the outtakes; but for *Darkness* I feel like I took it a step further, so that I was constantly referencing tracks you knew as a fan and using the music in a way that you wouldn't quite be familiar with it, stripping it down.

The way that you built the film around that—as a non-filmmaker, I typically imagine that when a movie is made, the movie is made and then it is scored. That's not what your process was.

No, my process is to start with the music immediately, because the music is guiding me. But I don't want the music that's the final record. The worst thing I could do as a filmmaker is put someone talking over the lyrics of Bruce Springsteen. That's the filmmaking language of *Classic Albums* or *Behind the Music*—more of a VH1 approach. And that works fine in that structure, but like you said before, it's not really a film about the making of the album.

It's interesting that a lot of the reviews, at least from the film festival appearances, seemed to get that. Nobody was saying, "Hey, it's the making of *Darkness on the Edge of Town!*"

It's sort of gotten back to the "making of" idea in some of the general press, but it had a life where it was understood.

Well, you had a whirlwind of film festivals: Toronto, Rome, and London.

Toronto was a great experience because first of all, having it projected that way was an amazing moment. When it's projected, your film takes on a different life. You live in this editing room, and you look at it for a long time, and it's on a pretty big monitor, but it's not with an audience in a theater. I got to sit with Jon, Barbara Carr, Greg Linn, and Bruce and Patti, and the film played to an audience of filmmakers as well as fans. And we cranked it *[laughs]*. That response was fantastic. I would have to compare it also to the response in Rome, which was really special. We all watched the film again, and it was a very, very passionate audience.

Passionate? In Italy? *[laughs]*

Yeah—can you imagine? But it's a very hard thing to describe. The quote at the end of the film, where Bruce is talking about how you pull the magic out of the air, and that's what you give to your audience—I know that's a rough paraphrase, but the audience at that point, at the end of that quote, *clapped*. That audience clapped when they saw Danny. That audience gasped at certain points that they connected to. And as a filmmaker, that's a great honor after working in a darkened room for all this time. I was really happy to have that moment with Jon and Bruce, because I've heard for years about the audience being really passionate there, but this was a different experience, I think, for everyone.

STILL FROM *THE PROMISE: THE MAKING OF DARKNESS ON THE EDGE OF TOWN*

When we were talking about *London Calling*, you talked about how often Bruce was there in the editing room with you, watching it again and again. Same thing for this? Or was the doc more something you did on your own?

You know, I think he's very gracious sometimes, and he'll say, like, "Thom would send me the cut..." but I feel like this was a hundred percent collaboration. From day one. And I define the collaboration in terms of the interviews that he gave me—that he went that far with all the subjects, with his creative process, with his understanding of the lawsuit. You have to remember that a huge part of the film is the participation of those interviews.

And Bruce's collaboration with me falls down to the smallest of details—saying, "I trust you to shoot the notebook and have the notebook for a period of time." Or, "I trust you to work with the outtakes of all the music." So when I define the collaboration, I also incorporate that idea of the trust.

I have very clear memories of his involvement at every stage. I love the cover that he picked, because it reminds me of *E Ticket*, which was an old vinyl bootleg that I remember as a kid.

But, you know, the film itself takes different stages, and as a filmmaker, the biggest thing that both Jon and Bruce give me is *time*. It's not time that is wasted by trying a million different directions—it's really focused time. And as a filmmaker, it's a rarity to get that moment to look at something and say, "Okay, we're going to define this doc, and we're going to get all the elements that are really going to tell a story." That's a huge gift.

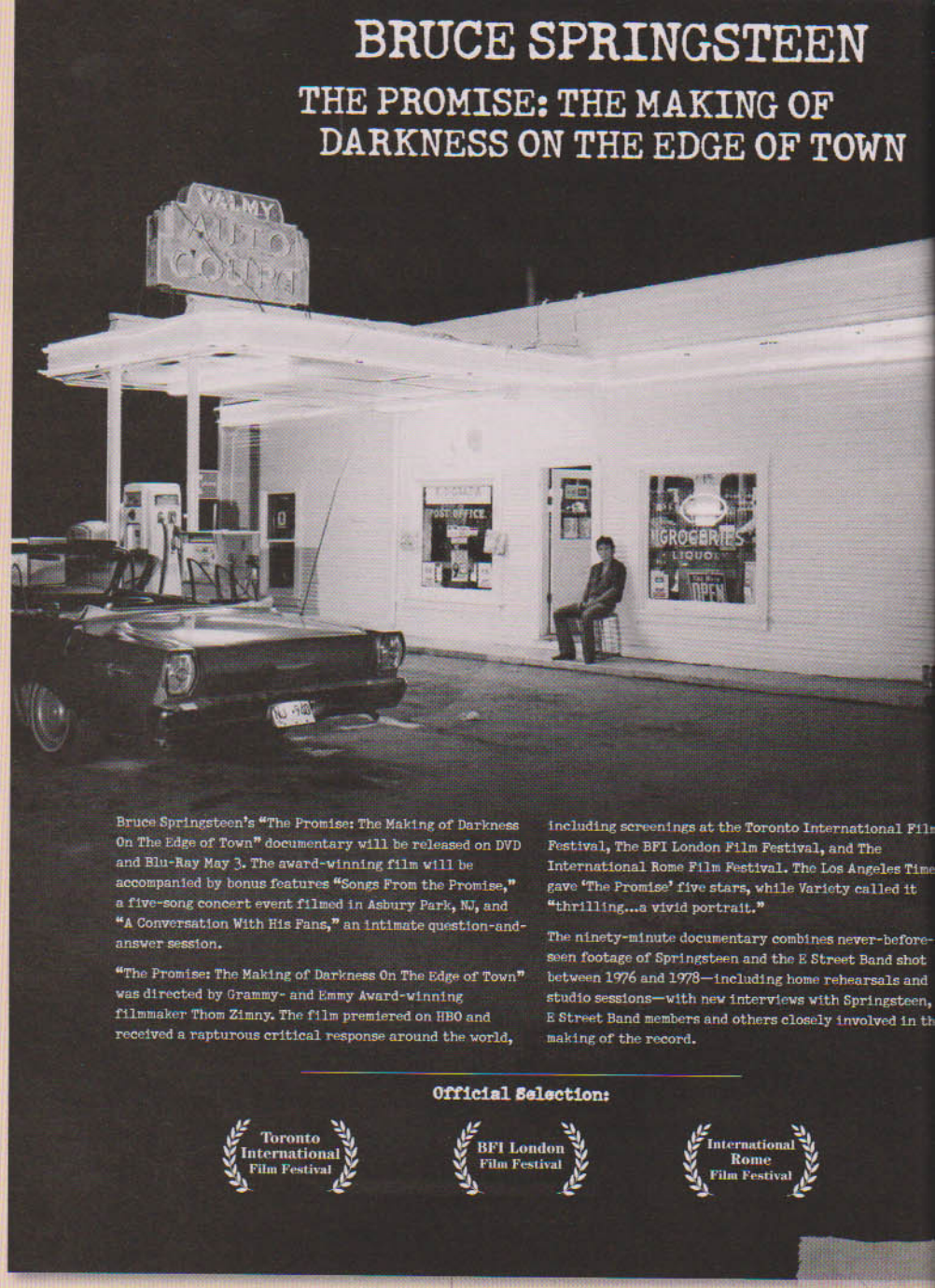
I'd like to hear more about how you told the story—you have all these elements, how do you figure out the structure?

At the beginning of the film it's deliberate to show Bruce talking on camera, and angry. And then we're going back in time. I deliberately had that up front, and I wanted to break the narrative flow by playing with the structure.

Within the first two minutes, you've got Bruce creating. Bruce in the middle of the studio saying, "It's not right." He's completely frustrated, and then you hear him saying, "Yeah, the album's done, but it didn't come out right." And then you see a montage of them working, and *then* you get into *Born to Run*.

So immediately I played with the structure, and throughout the film I do that in small places where Bruce is reflecting about before the album and after the album. It does have a linear approach in some of the details, because you want to follow the record, but up front I played with it right away. You don't start with *Born to Run*. "The success of *Born to Run*...."

That would be *Behind the Music*. "Coming off the 1975..."


BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
THE PROMISE: THE MAKING OF DARKNESS ON THE EDGE OF TOWN
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Bruce Springsteen's "The Promise: The Making of Darkness On The Edge of Town" documentary will be released on DVD and Blu-Ray May 3. The award-winning film will be accompanied by bonus features "Songs From the Promise," a five-song concert event filmed in Asbury Park, NJ, and "A Conversation With His Fans," an intimate question-and-answer session.
"The Promise: The Making of Darkness On The Edge of Town" was directed by Grammy- and Emmy Award-winning filmmaker Thom Zimny. The film premiered on HBO and received a rapturous critical response around the world, including screenings at the Toronto International Film Festival, The BFI London Film Festival, and The International Rome Film Festival. The Los Angeles Times gave 'The Promise' five stars, while Variety called it "thrilling...a vivid portrait."
The ninety-minute documentary combines never-before-seen footage of Springsteen and the E Street Band shot between 1976 and 1978—including home rehearsals and studio sessions—with new interviews with Springsteen, E Street Band members and others closely involved in the making of the record.
Official Selection:
Toronto International Film Festival
BFI London Film Festival
International Rome Film Festival

Exactly. And I have no interest in narration—outside of Bruce's narration of the Super Bowl—I have no interest in narration or title cards. That came from a training in documentary where you would never use that. You were *not allowed* to use that. I was an apprentice in editing docs, and then an assistant editor, and I was around a lot of successful documentaries where you never considered that language. It's really helped me to look at the interviews in a way to tell the story.

The interviews in the doc, did you do all of them?

Yeah.

For the *Wings for Wheels* film it was [the BBC's] Mark Hagen, wasn't it?

Right. At one point I had a friend help me ask some of the questions, so I gave her a credit. But I feel like a big part of the *Darkness* film for me was working with these guys in the band. They're aware of me at this point *[laughs]*, and they know me, so I wanted to do all the interviews.

Why didn't you do that for *Wings for Wheels*?

With *Wings for Wheels*, starting out, everyone knew Mark from a film that he had made with Bruce for the BBC. And I think at that point it was like, that's Mark's thing: he can interview the band. So we collaborated on that, and he did a great job.

But for this film I wanted to take in some of the experiences I had working with them on all the videos and all the other albums. Looking back at my experience, it was happening simultaneously—the doc was being made in the middle of making a lot of other films. I made the Super Bowl film. I made

The Promise: The Making of Darkness on the Edge of Town

By Daniel Joyaux

When Bruce Springsteen appeared on the cover of *Newsweek* in the fall of 1975, the headline read "The Making of a Rock Star." Thom Zimny's *The Promise: The Making of Darkness on the Edge of Town* is all about what happens next-both literally in the life of Bruce Springsteen, and metaphorically in the life of a young artist finding his way. The creation of the 1978 titular classic dealt with the *maintaining* of a rock star, and, by extension, the making of a rock legacy. The theme inherent in that narrative is one that's relevant to anyone who values artistic disciplines: how do you turn one success into sustained success, without sacrificing one iota of relevancy or integrity? Furthermore, when your public persona is heavily reliant on youthful romanticism, what happens when that sense of identity is eroded by the pain and struggle of adulthood?

Bruce delivers the key line about four minutes into the film. Speaking of the period following *Born to Run*, he says, "I had a reaction to my own good fortune, and I asked myself new questions." This response may seem like an obvious one, but it's rarely what happens. When most artists experience success, their ensuing time is spent trying to hone the formula and repeat it -- trying to capture lightning in a bottle a second time. Bruce himself says in a present-day interview that he was in danger of being a "flash in the pan, and for all [he] knew, that might be true." But he had an artistic reaction to his mainstream breakthrough, and that led directly to key artistic developments.

The lawsuit between Bruce and former manager Mike Appel that marred the period immediately following *Born to Run* certainly delayed *Darkness*, but also shaped it. As *Born to Run*'s success ensured Bruce's own life echoed the drama his characters were facing, the lawsuit saw that longed-for adventure crash into harsh reality. As Max puts it in the film, Bruce "had withstood the rigors of someone literally trying to take his future away," and that following *Born to Run*'s themes of escape, Bruce realized "you can't just run away." The effect this threat to Bruce's creative future had was a much more thoughtful consideration of what that future should be. In *Wings for Wheels*, Zimny's 2005 documentary about the making of *Born to Run*, the struggle is portrayed as being all about how best to capture the sound in Bruce's head. With *Darkness*, nothing was even narrowed down to a single sound -- at least not at first.

The question that haunted the sessions of *Darkness on the Edge of Town* is "Where do we go from here," and *The Promise* does an admirable job in exploring the many proposed answers. Many of the songs Bruce had been writing early in *Darkness*'s gestation period were heavily influenced by the Top 40 music he grew up on, but suddenly they seemed irrelevant to his growing concerns about real life and the people who lived it. Some of those songs changed, many new ones emerged, and we see the struggle to find a cohesive direction in fantastic revealing footage of the sessions shot on a Super 8 camera by Bruce's friend Barry Rebo. Recording engineer Jimmy Iovine noted that the *Born to Run* sessions only had nine songs, and eight of them made the album. The *Darkness* sessions, on the other hand, had as many as 70 songs. "It used to be, the first ten good songs you write, you put them out and that's your record," said Stevie. But on *Darkness*, "that process would end, forever, and it never came back."

Stevie points out that it takes "enormous discipline and willpower to not use great songs you had written," but that's exactly what Bruce did. "Because the Night" could have been a classic (and became one anyway-some quality just can't be denied), but it didn't fit the shape and mood of the album, so it was given away to Patti Smith. As Jon Landau points out in the film, "the work of art is the album," and every decision was in service to the greater whole. Even if you'd like to argue that some of the outtakes are better than some of the songs that made the album (I'd take "Don't Look Back" over "Factory," for example), none of the outtakes would better serve the album. It's this unyielding commitment to the big picture that has become one of the defining qualities of Bruce's career, and it never served him better than it did in the crafting of *Darkness*.

One of the most valuable lessons from *The Promise* is perhaps the most obvious one: making great art ain't easy. Each song on *Darkness* exists in its most perfect version because the time and effort was put in to get them there. The issues of artistic persona and career path demanded to be addressed and they were, despite many alternative routes that had to be set aside. "We had that one success, and some people, that's all they have," Bruce says in the film. Making *Darkness* was never simply about scoring that second success; rather, it was about trying to find a sustainable artistic narrative that might, with a little luck, provide a long-term trajectory for success. Neil Young once asked if it's better to burn out, or to fade away; here's how to do neither.

As the sessions drag on (and on), and Bruce's decisions over the direction of the album take a clearer shape, it becomes apparent the film has been showing us the formation of Springsteen's public and lyrical persona as people tend to think of it today. Bruce has even said himself in interviews that a major concern of his at the time was the need to create an identity. When Springsteen endorsed Barack Obama for President in 2008, he spoke of his music chronicling the "gap between American promise and American reality." With well-conducted interviews of the major players and Rebo's revealing footage, Zimny shows us that while *Born to Run* may have chronicled a bit of American promise, *Darkness* is the real ground zero for Springsteen's tackling of American reality and the space between.

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"The Wrestler." I did "Long Walk Home." I did "Jersey Devil." All those were great experiences as a filmmaker that were constantly reminding me of this other story.

I saw the Bruce of *Darkness* in all his other projects, and I saw the relationship with Jon and Bruce all the time in the studio, during the making of *Working On a Dream* especially, that friendship and that collaboration. So all that informed the doc, and my interviews.

Then the archival footage was so important too, obviously, and there are just some stunning moments. You can have a lot of people talking about something, or you can just let the footage play. And I chose to let the archive play a lot of times. Like where you have Steven and Bruce singing "Sherry Darling."

Which is so jaw-droppingly great.

It's an incredible moment. Sometimes you don't really have a clue as to why you're watching something; being an editor, you follow that voice.

A voice that's telling you what?

The voice that says something's there. A lot of times you don't want to question why you keep watching something, and why there's an interest there. For me, the beginning of the film, the first minute—the very first second—I kept watching over and over again, seeing something very powerful. I'm not sure what it is, but I just *love* this. It's Bruce working out "Promised Land," but it's also Bruce stopping the band on the beat. He goes, 'Wait, wait. Quiet. Quiet." They're playing in the background. It stops. They're just that quick.

You see the bandleader. You see the raw creative power and the process of creating. The process of creating—how do you film that? How do you show that? How do you show someone *thinking* about how to make these chords and make this song and this melody? And then you see his focus. He's not looking at the camera. He's just dead ahead. And then the camera pans down to him about ready to strum, to begin the song again, but it's this long, long wait, and it's like... *begin the movie.*

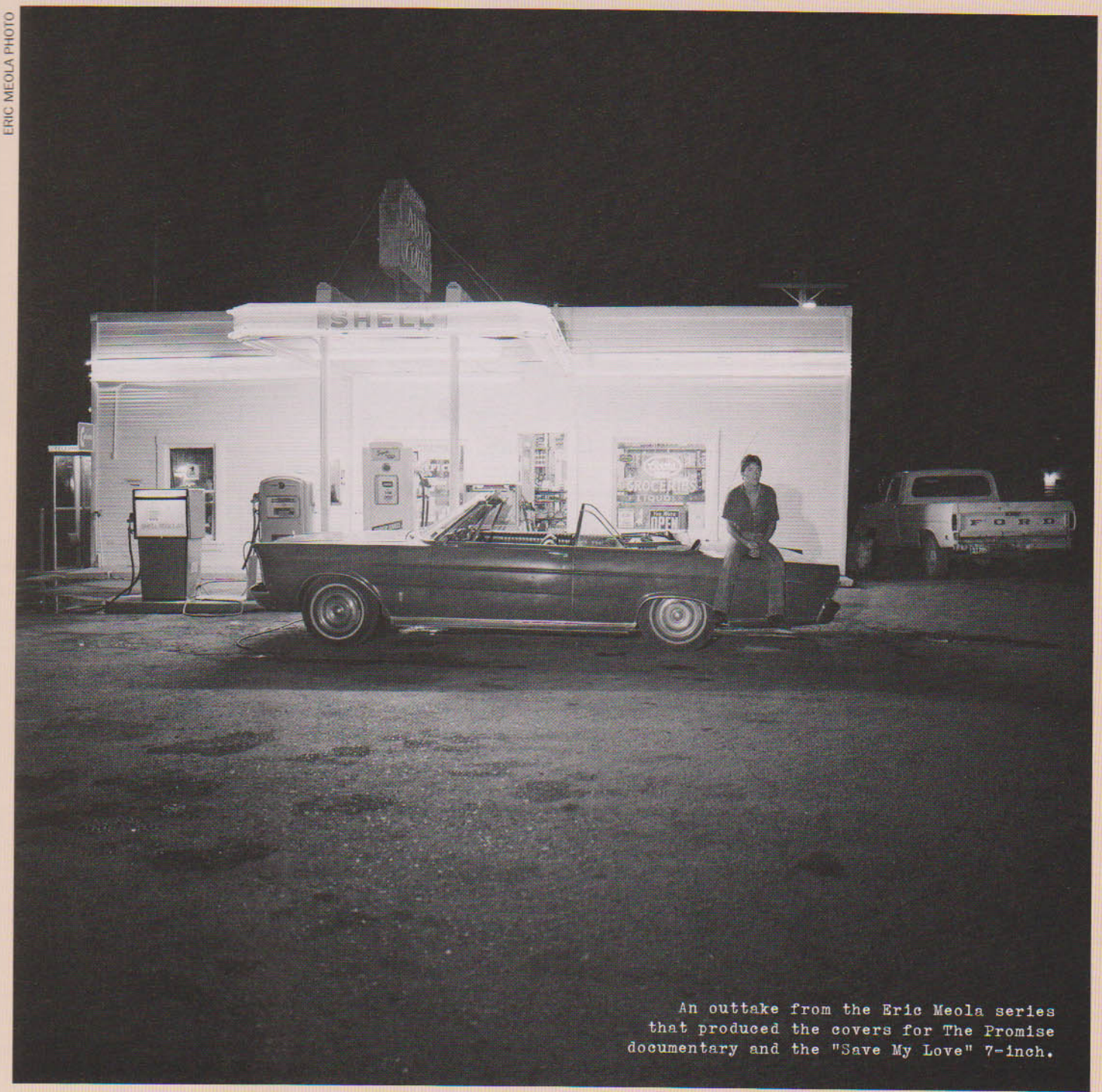
Very early on in the editing, I didn't have a film at all. I had that clip. And it was right up front, and that's the way the film was going to start. Because it captured for me all the themes I wanted to remind myself about every single day: Bruce the bandleader, Bruce in the process of changing, Bruce not aware of the camera. All those elements I described, sometimes one clip will be a guide on how you want to structure the film.

The best way I can answer something like, "How'd you make that film?" would be to say, "Look at the first three seconds." With him in the T-shirt, with the Tele, and that look. I don't think I was conscious of that until recently, seeing it screened; and I'm grateful that I wasn't conscious of it. It's one of those things where you trust yourself, and you don't even know why you keep watching this clip, but it's going to guide you in a way that will guide you for 90 minutes.

And remember, I had years and years of working on this *[laughs]*, so you want things to be strong enough that you don't change them, in time, just because you've had many

The *Darkness*-era E Street Band.

FRANK STEFANKO PHOTO



ERIC MEOLA PHOTO

An outtake from the Eric Meola series that produced the covers for The Promise documentary and the "Save My Love" 7-inch.

experiences with them. You don't want to change your film just because you've had a lot of time on it.

Like knowing when a painting is done?

Exactly. In four years' time, you might want to tweak something to have a different experience. And that's where I feel like my relationship with Jon and Bruce works so well, because they remind me, in their approach to the albums and the work, how sometimes you just let go of something—even when it's really great—if it doesn't help tell the story.

As a filmmaker and an editor, the best thing for me is to be around the body of work that they've done, and also have access to the creative process and the outtakes, because it reminds me that if you build a sequence in your documentary that's really nice but has nothing to do with driving the story forward...

The modus operandi of this whole *Darkness on the Edge of Town* period—which I guess is what you're getting at—is basically, throw it out if it doesn't help tell the story. So you're working on a film about people trying to figure out what to throw out to serve the story, and your challenge is figuring out what to throw out to serve that story. Which leads me to this question: just how much Barry Rebo stuff was there?

There's a *ton* of Barry Rebo footage. I don't know the exact number. I'm not being vague—there's just so much of it, and it's wonderful footage. But when I look back in the *Darkness* section, I feel like there's nothing I'm missing in the doc that, as a fan, we really gotta see. I feel like I used it. I used a good portion of it.

What really works for me is the combination of using what served the story in the documentary but still getting the full cut of, say, "The Promise" as bonus material. I mean, it's hard to complain—

Worry your ass off: Bruce Springsteen and Edward Norton, Mavericks

By Daniel Joyaux

The Bruce Springsteen album that became *Darkness on the Edge of Town* arrived out of a "search for a purposeful work life," Springsteen told Edward Norton in the interview the actor conducted with him as part of the Toronto International Film Festival's Mavericks series on September 14, 2010, just a few hours before the premiere of Thom Zimny's documentary film about the album's creation.

In an interview that lasted about 70 minutes, the two stars (wearing almost identical outfits- the subject of an early joke) talked about a wide variety of topics within the *Darkness* atmosphere, including the influence of film on Springsteen's work, the realization that you have a platform to express important issues to a fan base, the origins and influences of the new direction Springsteen's music would take, and the growing connection to political reality contained within Springsteen's songwriting.

Norton started the evening off with an anecdote. A little over ten years ago, shortly after he met Springsteen for the first time, Norton went backstage after a show and ran into Steve Van Zandt. "Man, you really fucked us up tonight!" Steve said. Norton was confused, and he asked Van Zandt what he meant. Before the show, Norton had requested that Bruce play "For You," because he noticed it hadn't been in the setlist for years. When it was time for the song, Van Zandt and the rest of the E Street Band were confused by the setlist, which appeared to say "For You - E-Flat." Steve conferred with Bruce about, first of all, why they were even playing that song, and second of all, why it was in E-Flat. "No, no," Bruce told Steve, "That says 'Ed'! It's for Ed!" At the evening's conclusion, Bruce thanked Norton and called him "the only man that could fuck up the E Street Band."

The first substantive question Norton asked was in reference to the changing tone of Bruce's work that *Darkness* is known for. He noted that Bruce was one of the first people to "look at the darkness in the country and get your audience to come there with you," and he asked Bruce how he gained the confidence to think his audience would follow him to such a different place.

"Blues did it first," Springsteen answered. "And Dylan went there with *Highway 61*, which gave me the first portrait of how the country felt. Dylan took the darkness and pushed it to the front." Bruce admitted that the sessions for the album began with a lot of happy, bar band and Brill Building-style songs, but in light of several factors -- the punk explosion, the lawsuit with Mike Appel, the end of the Vietnam War, the weak Carter-era economy -- those songs simply "didn't fit the times." *Darkness* emerged out of the need to create something that did.

In response to Bruce's assertion that the record's direction also arrived out of a need to "create an identity" for himself, Norton asked if the measure of success achieved with *Born to Run* created the "courage to put out a work like that."

"No," said Springsteen, "it was done out of fear. No E Streeter had even been on an airplane," and there was a degree of guilt that emerged from being the only person anyone knew with any money.

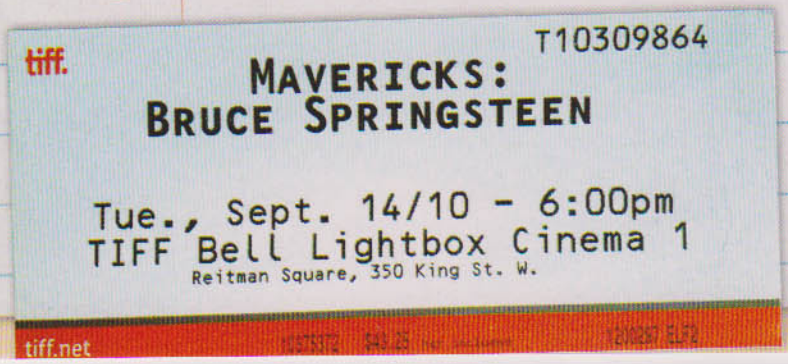
As the subject switched to some of the inspirations Springsteen was drawing from for his new songwriting focuses, Norton's questions began to lose a degree of focus and specificity; in fact, it was often Springsteen who was bringing things back on topic. At times it was apparent that, even though Bruce and Norton have been friends for years, Norton was still a fan getting the chance to interview one of his heroes. It was understandable-and a bit endearing-that Norton came across as slightly nervous.

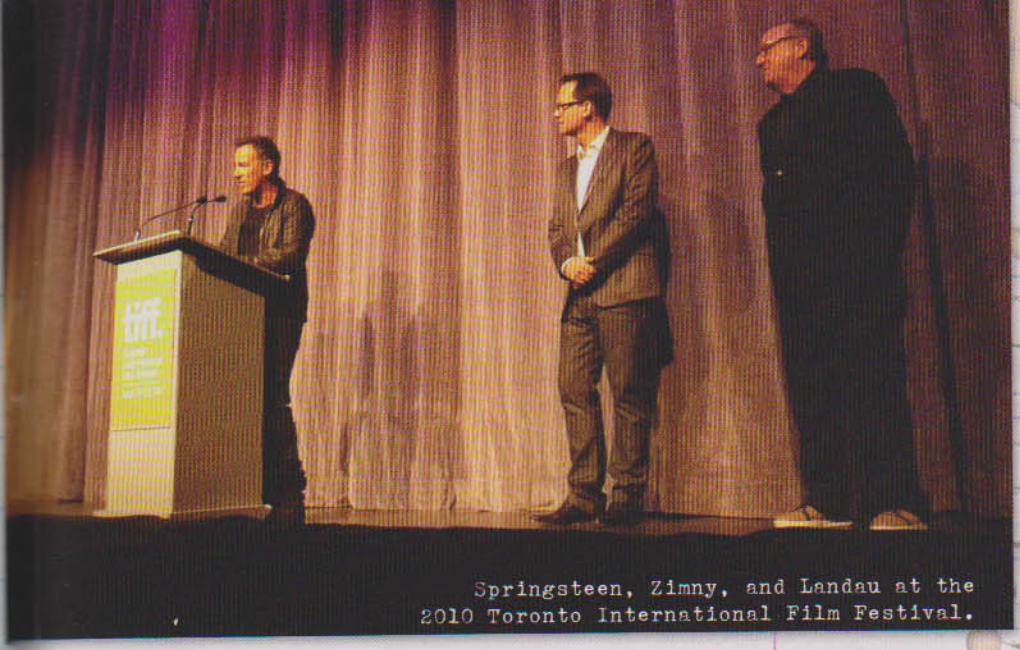
Speaking to Norton's questions about the new focus on landscape in the songs, Springsteen noted that Jon Landau had been a film critic, and he helped Bruce find influence in other places at a time when his musical influences had "been digested." Particularly some of the films of John Ford helped Bruce realize in his songwriting that "we all have landscapes with us."

During a tour stop in Los Angeles, the band had met Martin Scorsese & Robert De Niro, who set up a screening of *Mean Streets* for them. *(Taxi Driver* was also released during the making of *Darkness.)* Springsteen noted that he once heard Scorsese say that the goal of an artist is to "get an audience to care about your obsessions," and that *Darkness* was really the album where he started to do this. It took years, and the band constantly thought they had to be doing it wrong, but "we were doing it the only way we knew how. We set our sights *big;* it was not a modest undertaking. We don't have to make records the same way now, but we try to keep that integrity."

As for career inspiration, Springsteen he noted that, at the time, the oldest rock stars were still in their mid-30s, and that he never thought you could be a rock musician for more than a few years. "They started looking for the new Dylan when Bob was only 30," Bruce joked.

The evening contained a handful of humorous moments like that. At one point Norton quoted from Walt Whitman's "Leaves of Grass" ("He's from Jersey!" the Boss pointed out) and mentioned that Springsteen had once given him some good romantic advice. "Yes," Bruce said, "and I'll be handing some out backstage later for anyone interested." And for the people who think Bruce often can't remember his own lyrics, there was a surprise in store. When Norton asked about the reference to Kingsley Street in "Racing in the Street," Bruce quickly corrected him, saying, "That was 'Something in the Night.'" For anyone who's watched Bruce in concert repeatedly glance down at the teleprompter, it was mildly startling to see him so quickly pick up on a misplaced lyric.





Springsteen, Zimny, and Landau at the 2010 Toronto International Film Festival.

Turning the attention to weightier subjects, Norton asked Bruce when he "started drawing connections to political reality," to which Bruce replied that it was on *Darkness* and *The River*. "You either had the '60s experience or you didn't," Springsteen said, echoing a thought from the film *Field of Dreams*. "My brother-in-law didn't-it was all '50s." After many conversations with Landau were spent "trying to sort out what was true, I felt there was a story in there somewhere that wasn't being told in rock music."

On that note Norton asserted that "everyone with a platform eventually realizes they can use it; was that *Darkness* for you?"

"Yeah," Bruce replied, "you start telling people who they should vote for President."

Shifting the conversation to current music, Norton commented that every generation thinks they'll be the cool parents ("Yeah, they're wrong," Bruce deadpanned), and he wanted to know if Springsteen kept up with what his kids are listening to. "Neil Young once said that Nirvana kicked his ass," Norton continued. "Do you bump into work that kicks your ass?"

"That's the gun-slinging life," Bruce replied. "You're always looking over your shoulder." He named a handful of newer bands that he's been paying attention to, including The Gaslight Anthem, Against Me!, and the Dropkick Murphys.

And if Bruce could see a film similar to *The Promise* but centered upon any other record, what would it be? "*Pet Sounds*, or maybe *Highway 61*," he quickly replied.

Going back to the Darkness album, and in response to Bruce saying that it was "carved from a big chunk of stone with huge ambition and ego," Norton asked him to go back and look at that stone, and see how it feels. Specifically, Norton wanted to know about the decision to cut off "The Promise," which many regard as one of the best songs from the sessions. "That song felt too self-referential," said Bruce, "and we wanted to get the ten toughest songs."

Norton's final question of the evening: if Bruce could talk to the 27-year-old kid making that album, what would he say? To answer, Bruce recalled the time around his fortieth birthday, when a doorman told him not to worry too much. "That may be good advice for life," Springsteen told Norton, "but not for working. Worry your *ass* off." The point was clear: three decades on, Bruce Springsteen knew that all the worrying that 27-year-old kid had done was well worth it. "The first three records were prequels," he said, but *Darkness on the Edge of Town* was the real beginning of "the long conversation I've had with my fans."

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MARK CERILLO PHOTO

you never get to see a full song in the documentary! Well, you get it on the next disc.

Yeah, and that was 100 percent Bruce. When you look at the *Thrill Hill Vault:* "Save My Love," wanting that to be part of it. Pulling out "Something in the Night," which is, like, a two-camera shoot, and it's dark—but it's an amazing performance, and he wanted to go with that. "Don't Look Back," that was Bruce's idea, too: pull together a "Don't Look Back" montage of some of the Rebo stuff that you just didn't see. "Ain't Good Enough For You" is not complete, but there are sections of it.

So between the vault and the documentary, you got out all the Rebo footage that was worth getting out?

When I look at the content in the box set, I don't have anything as a fan or a filmmaker that I'm like, "Oh, God, why didn't they put this out?" I feel like the doc and the bonus materials cover everything that's in the vault that tells the *Darkness* story.

But there's more there.

Well, there are other elements—like Red Bank, New Jersey, the Carlton show—but they're not *Darkness*.

To have "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out" in the doc is a great moment, but it doesn't really tell the story. They're not even bonus clips. They're performances. Nothing's a throw-away. The vault sequencing and selection was as intense as the doc, and as intense as making the 2009 performance. It's not like we were like, all right...

Here are the leftovers.

Here are the leftovers, right. "The Promise" is so great—I found the video and I showed it to Bob Clearmountain and Toby Scott, and I called Bruce. He said, "Let's see if we can find the audio." And we found the audio, and synced it up, and it's in stereo and surround, that full take. And it's complete. The lyrics are different; it's a stripped down thing. But also you get to see how the band performed.

And when it pans around to Danny, that was the lump-in-the-throat moment for me. You mentioned "Save My Love"—Bruce talked about how that was a song he rediscovered through the Rebo footage, as opposed to through the audio vaults. Did you bring that to his attention?

Yeah. We had a session together where I was showing him some of the Holmdel footage, and I said to him, "What's the name of this song? I have it labeled as 'Mystery Song.'" And he said, "What? Let me see this..." and then, "I remember this song!" *[laughs]*.

So we watched that footage together, and then Toby and Bruce looked for the tracks—and there are no tracks in the audio vault of the complete "Save My Love." So he brought the band back and they rerecorded it.

It's one of my favorite memories, playing that video for him, and also playing it for the band on the day of that session. You can see that in the music video, some of that footage I shot, where the band is actually watching "Save My Love" for the first time.

Oh, that's cool—I didn't make that connection. That's in the music video you made for the rerecording?

Right, mostly at the end. Jon invited me down to the studio, and I just brought a really small camera, as I always do, and it was just a spontaneous moment. I was sitting on the side and Bruce brought out a DVD of "Save My Love." He said, "This is what we're gonna record today." He played it for the band, and they were blown away. They just didn't remember the track.

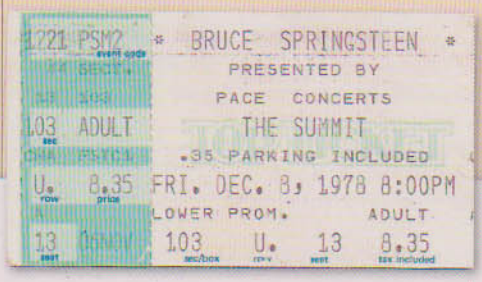
Sure—one track from 32 years ago?

"Save My Love" is a really great video—the Holmdel footage on the box—and a great raw document. You see the band in that farmhouse, and there's no TV. What I love about the archival footage, both the Holmdel sessions and the studio footage, is that you see how much music was the *only* thing going on. There is no TV. There are no distractions, no hangers-on. There's only the band and Jon.

And don't forget Steve with no hat. I like the way you incorporated that footage into the new video, juxtaposing the past and the present.

Yeah, that music video was fun to do. I filmed the band and Bruce doing the new takes of the song, and we also went through some of the Phoenix outtakes. There were some great moments just with the communication with Bruce and the band and the fans at that time. I love the footage where the guy's in the audience, he's so taken by the music, he goes up on stage and shakes Bruce's hand. And then he runs back in the audience. It's just a great moment from '78.

So: Phoenix outtakes. In talking about the Houston film, I'd actually like to start there, with other things that might have been considered. Of course there's been a lot of chatter, about what's out there and what isn't, and what might be in the vault... Am I right that there's no complete Phoenix?



No complete Phoenix. There's no Madison Square Garden filmed show.

Yeah, that was a hot topic.

I've never seen a Madison Square Garden show from '78. Honestly. I don't know if it exists. If someone has it, I hope they get in touch with me soon.

I've heard rumors for years about the Winterland show—in black and white, they filmed everything—but I have yet to see it. At this point, that stuff is all rumor. Especially the idea of a Madison Square Garden show existing. If it's out there, we'd love to see it. I've never seen a sign of it, and I've combed the archives. And I've been on this for four years.

Was there anything else considered? There's Passaic....

There's Passaic, there's Largo... Bruce reviewed and studied everything that's out there. As did I. I looked at the master tapes of Passaic. I found the master tapes, and I was sure that I'd found a better version of that black-and-white show that we all had bootlegged. And I was shocked, because it just didn't feel much better than the bootlegs that are out there.

That's surprising to me, too. The master looks that way?

Yeah, it's the cameras. You can see on the bootlegs, sometimes they were overexposed, sometimes they were underexposed. You could try to fix that in color correct, and I did one song. But it still lacked a lot of detail. And at the end of the day, it still didn't really give you the detail you need to see of the band. It just didn't feel much better than the bootleg. And that's with color correction and doing all the tricks that we can.

And that was still a house cut too, I assume.

Yeah. There's no isolated cameras on that. So we went through them all. And in detail. Set lists, image quality. I forget the full list now, but everything's out there.

HOUSTON CLIPPING AND STUB COUTESY OF ED GRAY

4C /The Houston Post/Sat., Dec. 9, 1978 ★

Music review

Bruce Springsteen

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN — Rock artist and his E-Street Band performed in concert Friday night in the Summit. Personnel: Springsteen (vocals, guitar), Clarence Clemons (saxophone), Miami Steve Van Zandt (guitar), Danny Federici (organ), Roy Bittan (piano), Garry Tallent (bass), Max Weinberg (drums). Presented by Pace Concerts.

By BOB CLAYPOOL

As always, he walked it like he talked it — no, in fact, he *strutted* it once more. Are you surprised? Even after seeing all those T-shirts in the crowd that proclaimed the truth if ever it was told? They were the ones that said simply, "THE BOSS IS BACK."

Was he ever! Springsteen, the Asbury Park flash, the Jersey prince himself, spent Friday night in The Summit pumping out rock 'n' roll as though he were the man who invented it in the first place, sending out scores of guitar solos that were powerful enough to shake your fillings loose, yet so tasteful and utterly *right*, so full of poetry and promise, they made your calloused heart beat like a school-kid's. And, if that weren't enough — if Bruce's own Telecaster blasting, matched up with the contributions from the E-Street Band, weren't poignant enough to bowl you over — there was Bruce's singing, which was guaranteed to flip you to the mat and make you stay there.

There were some songs in this show, for example, that Springsteen has never sung better on a Houston stage — things like *Fire* and a version of *Because the Night* that nearly made the building explode, simply because they built-up, then released, such a tremendous amount of emotional pressure. The crowd went stark, raving nuts over the latter tune, but then, this crowd was pretty well bonkers all night long.

And, happily enough, this was Bruce's largest audience ever in Houston, which is, self-admittedly, one of his "best" cities. The Summit was sold out, which means that this was about twice the number of people who saw the Coliseum concert back in July, and Heaven only knows how many more listeners this was than the number who attended the original gig at Liberty Hall years ago.

All of which goes to prove that Springsteen is hardly the mere "critic's favorite" he was once tagged. No critic or "cult" artist could cause the kind of madness he inspired in 17,000 plus at this Friday night show.

Once again, too, it was smoking right from the very start — from that moment (at 8:38 p.m.) when Bruce and band blasted straight into *Badlands* and immediately had most of the crowd jumping to its feet and screaming like some sort of wacked-out POWs witnessing a kind of Great Liberation. In a way, that wasn't far from the truth, because The Boss is a sure cure for the too-much-disco, too-much-MOR-pap, too-much-electronic-noodling blues. He simply put out it out straight, with great street stories, knockout playing all-around and, perhaps most important, the kind of revved-up energy most rockers can only (at worst) dream about, or (at best) simulate.

ZAP! He ran from end of the stage to the other like a manic little rooster, now doing a long slide on his knees while wailing on guitar, now diving out in the crowd to stalk the aisle with Clarence Clemons honking saxophone behind him, now jumping on top of a bank of amps and then taking the great leap off, now resting quiet, yet coiled, in front of the mike for a low sotto voice endearment and, always, always, giving it his all — a heart on fire for rock 'n' roll.

How could we fail to respond? To give in completely to newer tunes such as *Streets Of Fire*, *Darkness On the Edge of Town*, *Candy's Room*, *The Promised Land* and a version of *Racing In the Street* that cut even the one we heard at the July concert (and that, pal, was enough to make your hair stand on end), or oldies like *It's Hard to Be a Saint In the City*, *Spirit In the Night*, *Jungle Land* (which segued perfectly into *Thunder Road*) and (once again, for Austin and Houston shows only), a fine, fine *The Fever*.

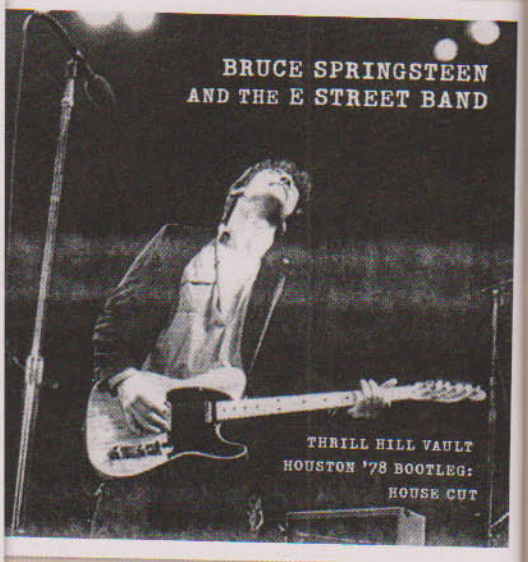
A heart on fire for rock 'n' roll

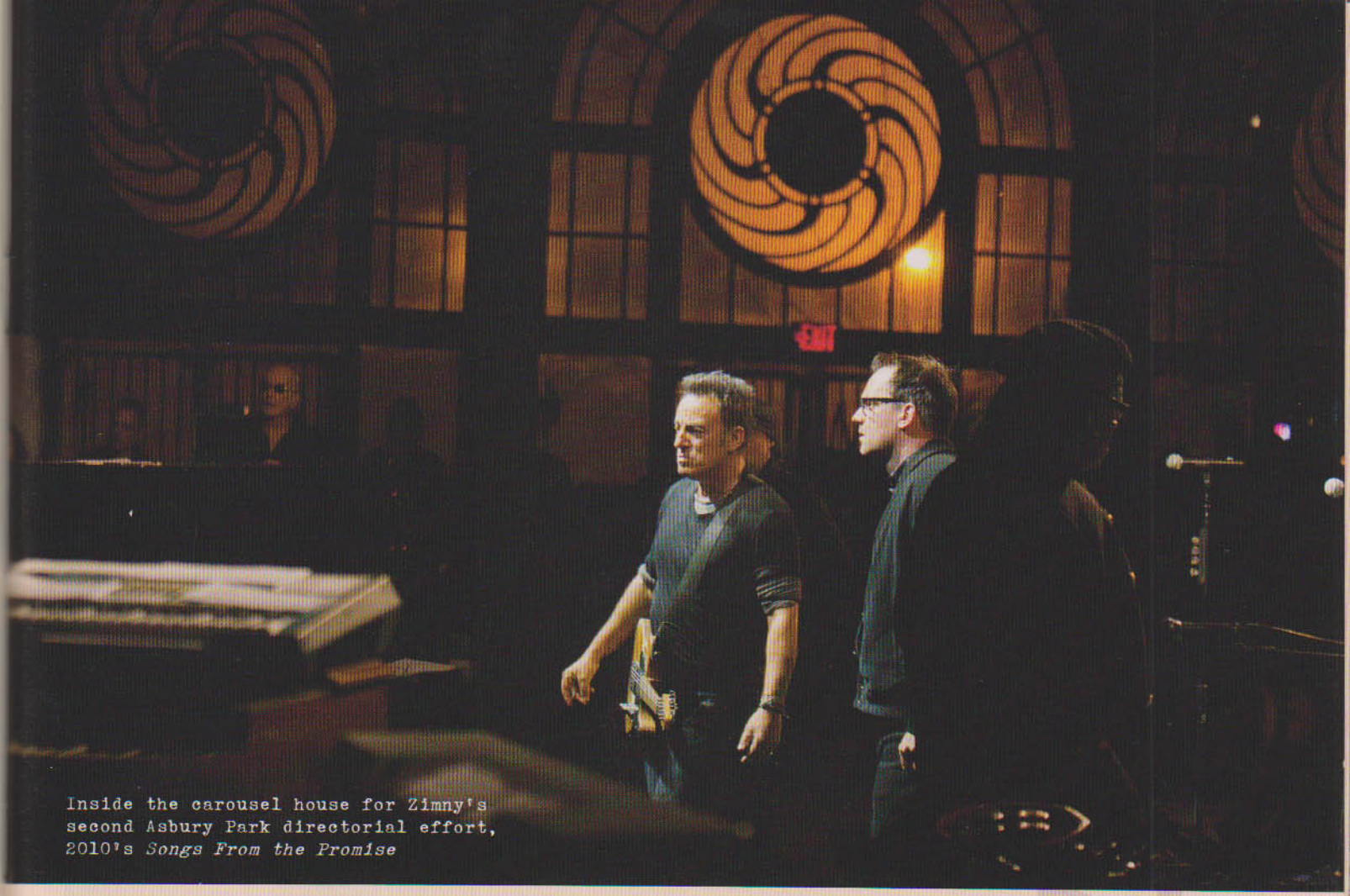
— Post photo by Jerry Click

And, add to that such new and as yet unrecorded gems as *Independence Day*, *The Ties That Bind* and a thing called *They Shot You Point Blank*, plus a rock 'n' roll version of *Santa Claus Is Coming To Town* (with Clemons playing St. Nick) and you get some idea of what a magnificent night it was.

Yeah, magnificent! And everybody there will tell you the same. At one point, during *Thunder Road*, Springsteen sang: "So you're scared and you're thinking that maybe we ain't that young anymore," then stopped. And the crowd picked it up and answered, "Show a little faith, there's magic in the night . . ."

And that one moment said it all.





Inside the carousel house for Zimny's second Asbury Park directorial effort, 2010's *Songs From the Promise*

DANNY CLINCH PHOTO

So Houston is the only thing that wasn't out there.

Yeah, but what's really important is that that didn't matter.

Well, that had to be *part* of the equation.

Part of it—but it doesn't matter, not in the sense of "Oh, this'd be great, it's never been seen!" If there were a *better show*, that held up in terms of image and sound and performance, the fact that Houston wasn't out there wouldn't have mattered. That's a serious consideration whenever you get into that sort of creative discussion.

It really was the best thing you had, not just the least-seen?

Yeah. And in comparing the performances and the sound, it definitely stood out. It was a couple of three-quarter tapes, and it was the house edit. That means that I had no isolated cameras to re-edit or change the cut, and there was no audio outside the soundboard mix.

So obviously you couldn't do the kind of edits you can do with a multi-camera thing, but what were you able to do?

Crushed the blacks, color corrected, restored the best I could with color correction. And I went through it song by song. Things were over-saturated with some of the reds—let's pull it back a little bit. There's not a ton you can do. But we definitely made some... *[laughs]*... we spent a lot of time on it. And Bob Ludwig played around with sound and got it to be much better.

There was a tape change that did happen toward the end of the show, so there were two glitches. One in "Racing in the Street," and one that I was able to fix in "Quarter to Three," I think. The one in "Racing," it just goes for a second, and it's just the visual white snow. I could have cut to black, but it stays true to its....

Hey, it's a bootleg house cut, right?

Exactly. And outside of that, you have this great presentation, I think, of a '70s show that no one has ever seen. Compared to everything else we looked at, when you would put up Houston, and if you kept it in its proper four by three presentation, you started to read a lot of the detail of Bruce in performance. I think Bruce wanted to get it out there because everyone quickly realized that this was a special show. The energy just came across the screen. It's a really simple thing. At the end of the day it was a decision that was explored with Bruce and Jon and myself, Houston kept coming forward and giving you the impression of seeing *the band*.

Plus, certain things were translated in audio on bootlegs from the '78 tour, and for me, the beauty of Houston is that you do have some of those details finally on screen. Like the "Prove It All Night" intro, or the "Sad Eyes" breakdown. To see those on video, if you own the bootlegs...

And for me it's "when me and the Big Man do this..."

"But when we do *this!*" Right. It's a great moment as a fan, to have these things. And Bruce went into it and fully embraced the idea of it being the house cut, like a bootleg. If you look at the packaging of it, it's got the details of every bootleg that we love *[laughs]*. Dave Bett and Michelle Holme did the art direction. It deliberately has a cover that represents a black-and-white Xerox. A copy—that's the way early bootlegs were made. I think it also has a typo, which every bootleg would have.

It's funny, somebody e-mailed me about that typo, and I said I think that might be intentional, actually. For once, it might be intentional!

Yeah *[laughs]*. And the burnt-out highlights. So when you hold it in your hands, I think it does bring back that sense of vinyl, the vinyl bootleg that you'd treasure.

Are there tracks that when you saw them, you thought, "Yes, this is the show we have to put out"?

Well, I watched the show with Jon and Bruce many times, and the first time we

Zimny, Springsteen, and Landau.
Asbury Park, NJ, December 7, 2010.

DANNY CLINCH PHOTO

watched it straight through. I remember everyone in the room really being excited by the performances of "Prove It All Night," and definitely "The Ties That Bind," which has a slightly different arrangement. I think "The Ties That Bind" and "The Fever" are just *amazing* performances.

And the big thing is that it was telling a part of the *Darkness* story. If you look at the journey, the start of it was the doc, and then it goes to the music and Bruce exploring the tracks, and then it goes into the details of what's in the vault to further tell that story. So we have the doc in a very good place at this point when we start to look at Houston. And I used bits of Houston *in* the doc, so it felt right because it was, again, part of the story.

And part of the reason that I think it works really well in that way is that it was the end of the tour. It bookends things that way, and it's so close to that classic Winterland show—just a week prior to it. When we first heard you were doing Houston, the first question we had was, "Which Houston show? Tell me it's the one from December...."

They were an amazing band, so tight at that point. I mean, for me, the "Streets of Fire" is just incredible, and it's not something you always got from that tour. As opposed to "Prove It" which was a staple, or "The Promised Land." Though "Promised Land" for me is great here, because it's ragged. And you're there, with him drenched in sweat.

And it's fun to see that version again—that song has changed so much, the way he does it now, it's become more of a gospel number. So it's great to see it the way it started.

That's right. You remember that the songs were out a short time at that point. "Badlands," for example, where it's fresh and it's new to the audience, but the band still has that same sort of confidence in delivering the message.

A big part of the visual aspect of Bruce being introduced to an MTV audience came out of the "Rosalita" flick down in Phoenix. A whole generation got a sense of the live show from that clip.

I know I did.

Yeah, I totally did, too. There wasn't a lot of visual representation of the band at that time. So you had these bootlegs that revealed more but also created a bit of mystery, too, in that you could hear but you couldn't see. So it's nice now to tie in an understanding of the band you might have had in the past—but also if you're a new fan, it just helps tell the story. I keep using that phrase, because it really does.

The notebook is fascinating on a lot of levels—one of which is just showing how much Springsteen worked and worked and worked and worked. The diligence bordering on obsession. There was that Malcolm Gladwell book *[Outliers]* addressing the idea that if you want to be great at something, it's not just a matter of innate talent. You have to put in 10,000 hours. If you put in 10,000 hours, you can be great at whatever you do. Bruce clearly put in the hours.

That's a great quote. Bruce and I were very determined throughout this project to tell the story in new and different ways, and the notebook was part of that. Bruce looked at the notebook and realized that showing those details would tell another part of the story that maybe the doc didn't cover, or that he didn't cover in interviews before. I feel like the art direction is amazing. And what I like is that you get the opportunity to literally explore it, with whatever amount of attention you want to put into it.

Which is how we were having fun on Backstreets.com, leading up to the release—picking out little details.

Yeah, that's exactly what I'm referencing. Some of the things you guys pulled out were great facts. One or two of them I didn't even recognize. And I thought I knew this book—and that's the beauty of it. There's always something else.

To see him writing not "Because the Night," but "The Night Belongs to Lovers." It's like when I had that opportunity to ask about "Preacher's Daughter," when you were filming at Sirius, and Bruce's initial reaction was "Well, the song wasn't actually called that." And that's what we've called it for years.

And I love "Talk to Me"—"Give to Steven." Just all those details. After I did the interview with Thom Panunzio, at the end of the interview, he goes, "Yeah, I used to have all those cassette boxes, I think I still do." I go, "Really?" So I called Bruce to talk about how the interviews went—I was really happy, and I was in L.A., and I just interviewed Jimmy [Iovine] and Thom. And I mentioned that he has all these cassette boxes, and Bruce said, "Ask Thom if you can borrow them and get a picture of them and scan them."

How much more, in terms of his notebooks and pages, are there, besides what we got here? I mean, is this just really the tip of the iceberg?

There's more, but this is the heart of it. And that's what I think is nice, is that you do see his working process: album titles, song phrases....

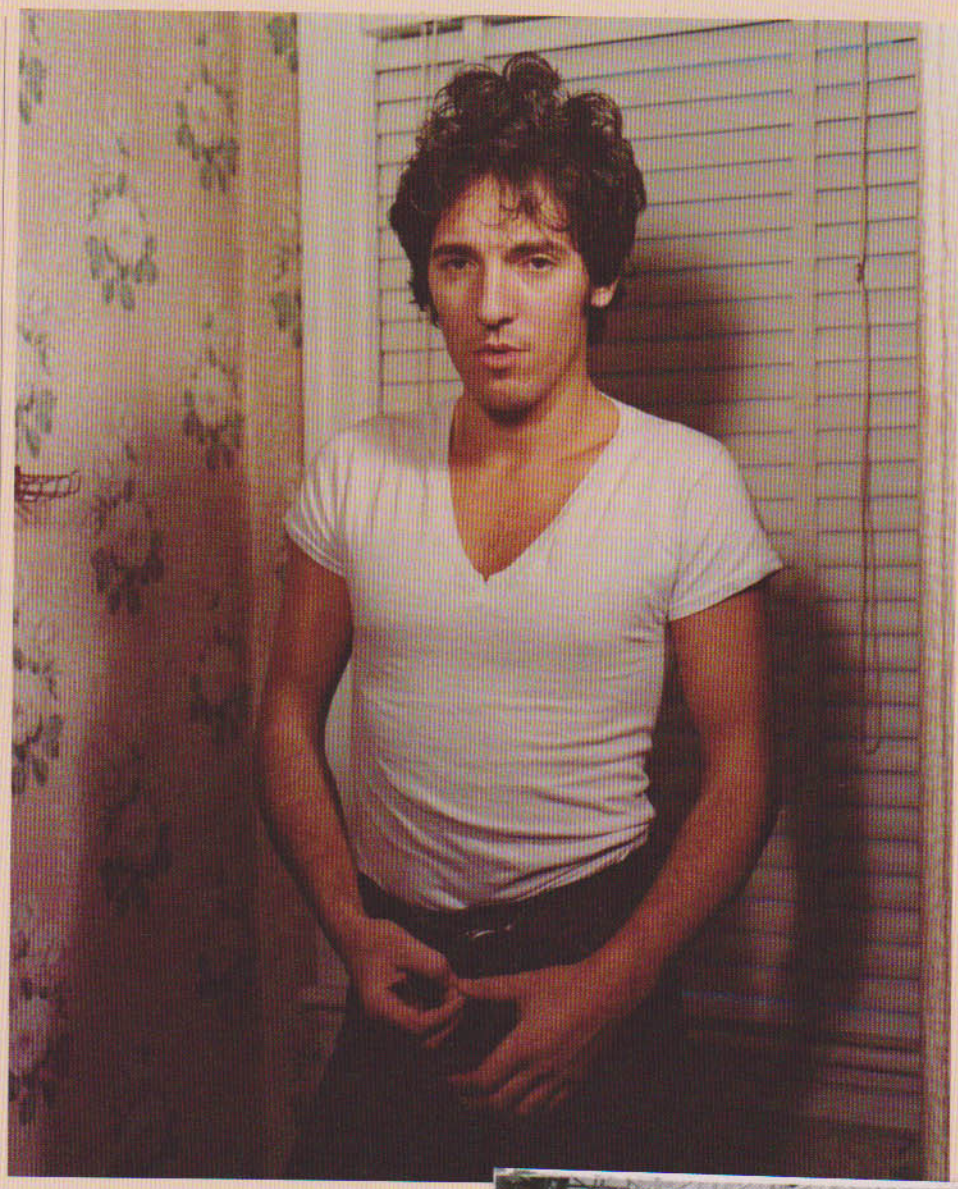
I love that "Rent the Badlands movie" note to himself. Because not only does that tie directly into *Darkness*, but it's the genesis of *Nebraska* too, right?

Completely. And there's a reference to Sonny as a she—actually, that's in the doc. I shot that page. But you can see that he's pulling out lines that mean something to him. You see a work in progress, and he came up with this way to work, which is lyrics, arrangements, details on mixes, phrases, and sequencing. The sequencing, to me, is really an important factor.

Looking at the doc, I needed to have this notebook, because to me it was another character in the film. It was as important as Jon and his relationship with Bruce. He gave me so much material to work with, just to explore the album differently. Then you look at Paramount. It's a totally different approach to the live venue or live documentation of the album.

What was the spark for the Paramount show? Did you feel like there was something missing from your vision in the box?

No, Bruce was reviewing the live concerts that we shot of the whole album on the last tour. It was after the documentary, Bruce looking at that live footage of various shows, and wanting a certain tone. And that tone can be achieved by going in closer.



FRANK STEFANKO PHOTO

So it was a tone that wasn't found in the live shows from '09?

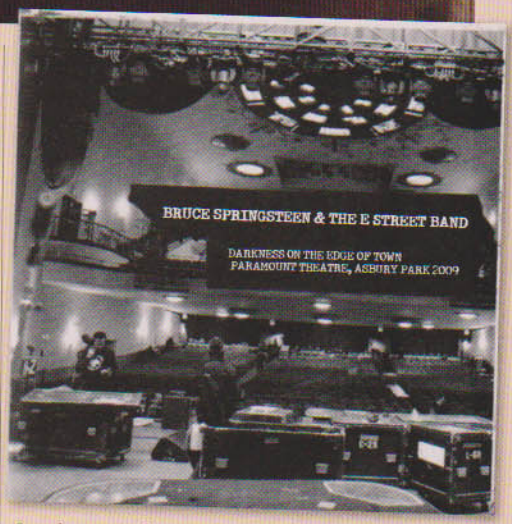
Well in those cases, the arrangements are opened up, and there's a communication going on with the audience. Not having that communication with the audience brings you even closer, I think, to some of the alienation and claustrophobic feeling of *Darkness*.

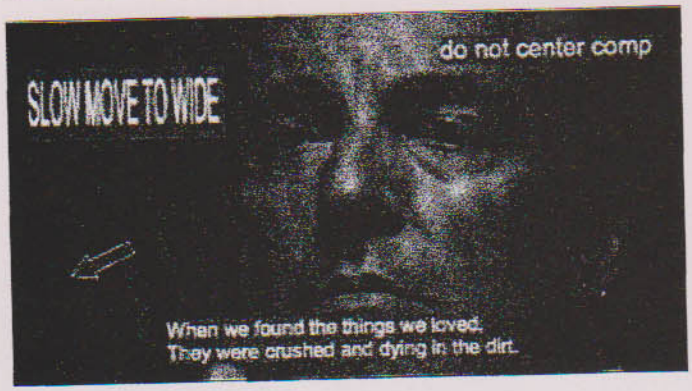
Gotcha. In concert it becomes more about the communion, and the back and forth with the crowd, drawing out the "Badlands" chant...

You'd be cutting to the crowd, singing along and cheering.

Shooting a performance without an audience—did you have any trepidation about that going in?

No, I was really trying to stay focused on telling the story. With the original arrangements of these songs, *not* opening them up for the crowd, it makes total sense within the context of the box set. If you take the journey with the re-mastered album and take the journey with the doc and then you go here, you really feel how powerful I think the band is all these years later, but also how these songs have lived on, and how Bruce is able to, at 61, tell a story.





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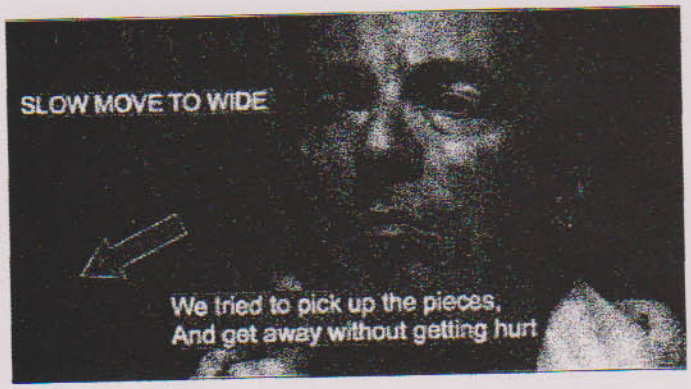


PASS 2

DARKNESS ON THE EDGE OF TOWN CONCERT

SHOOTING SCRIPT — CAM 6 STEADICAM

BADLANDS SIDE STAGE/ REV **PASS 2**

SONG PART	FEATURED PLAYER	CAMERA6 STEADICAM	LYRICS
INTRO	MAX/DRUMS CHARLIE/ORGAN	MAX	
FIRST VERSE	BRUCE		Lights out tonight trouble in the heartland
	ROY/ PIANO	ROY	Got a head-on collision smashin' in my guts, man
	MAX/ DRUMS	MAX	I'm caught in a cross fire that I don't understand
FIRST VERSE	BRUCE		But there's one thing I know for sure girl
	ROY/ PIANO	GARRY	I don't give a damn For the same old played out scenes
	MAX/ DRUMS	MAX	
	GARRY/ BASS	ROY	I don't give a damn For just the in betweens
FIRST VERSE	BRUCE	MAX	Honey, I want the heart, I want the soul
			I want control right now

ERIK REMEC PHOTO

Above: Max Weinberg with Zimny in 2010, for a NYC screening of *Paramount Theatre*. *Left:* Zimny has a notebook, too... breakdowns for the Paramount shoot.

And without a crowd, it's not that you don't go wide. It's not all close-ups. "Badlands" introduces all the players, and the space, so we start out in extreme wide, and you see everyone. I'm deliberately showing you, this is where we are, here are the people in the space. And also when the album changes, at the end of "Racing in the Street," I went to an extreme wide. So it's like flipping over the record.

You can see in the film right from the top, I want to establish this as an album—that we weren't going to a live event. That's why I put in the sound of the record player.

And the crackle of the vinyl. I want to talk about the look, too. One of the harder things to believe about this whole project is that Bruce was inspired by a Jean-Claude Van Damme film.

That's right—Bruce told me about *JCVD*.

It was the look of the film he liked, right? Can you tell that story a little bit?

Bruce has an amazing eye, and one of the great things about the collaboration continues to be that he will reference things—things that become a bit of a shorthand at times. So Bruce called me up and he told me about *JCVD*, and I went out and got the film and studied it. I understood the de-saturation he was looking for, and also some of the compositional elements, and it really gave me a different perspective on how to approach the show.

We talked about some of the things we shot in the past, and he gave me the greatest direction, which was, "I want this to feel claustrophobic, and I want you to *be there* with me, and I want the starkness that this film and these stills"—he also showed me some stills—"represent."

"This film" being *JCVD*?

Right. It's a great, great film *[laughs]*. I love how you can get a phone call like that, and that's your reference and you're totally off guard—it's exciting. The best part of the job is being influenced from something you *never* imagined. I never imagined that that would have that kind of play and influence on me.

"There's a Steven Seagal movie that you've just gotta see!"

Exactly! *[Laughs]* Whoa! But really... you've gotta see it.

So each shot here is individually color corrected to get this look. And then Jon is really a strong supporter of each one of the live DVDs telling a different story, *visually* telling a different story. Just as we started to go in another direction with *Hyde Park*, with the live cameras, Jon was really encouraging me to bring the camera in and cross over and go to places we haven't gone before.

And this time, they were your cameras. When we talked about *London Calling*, you sang Chris Hilson's praises a lot. Was this the first time you've directed a performance as well as edited?

Yeah, this is the first time I've shot anything live for Bruce. For me I just approached it much more narratively. I've worked on a lot of narrative pieces—I worked three seasons on *The Wire*, and that's a huge influence in my storytelling. Not the show itself, but that kind of editing and that kind of shooting.

As the director for something like this, are you on a headset telling people what to do, or do you just tell them in advance, or how does that work?

I had a headset, but I spent a lot of time in advance storyboarding what I wanted. With Paramount, I was able to plan my shots and break it down with storyboards. And because I had been around the music that much, I knew there were certain cameras that I wanted doing certain things at certain moments. When you get to "Something in the Night," there's that drum breakdown—I wanted all that in one continuous shot. So there was one cameraman who had storyboards where I said, "When this song comes up, this is your one move.... The rest of the song, do this, this, and this, but at that moment, that's the beat. That's where you've gotta be."

How many cameras did you have?

Nine.

So you really had to plan who was going to be where, especially being so close up.

Yeah, we did two or three takes, and I'd map it all out. I had a map for every take, maps showing where everyone would be, and we'd just have all these positions. You're here, you're in front of Max, and you're doing this. The next take, Max is clear.

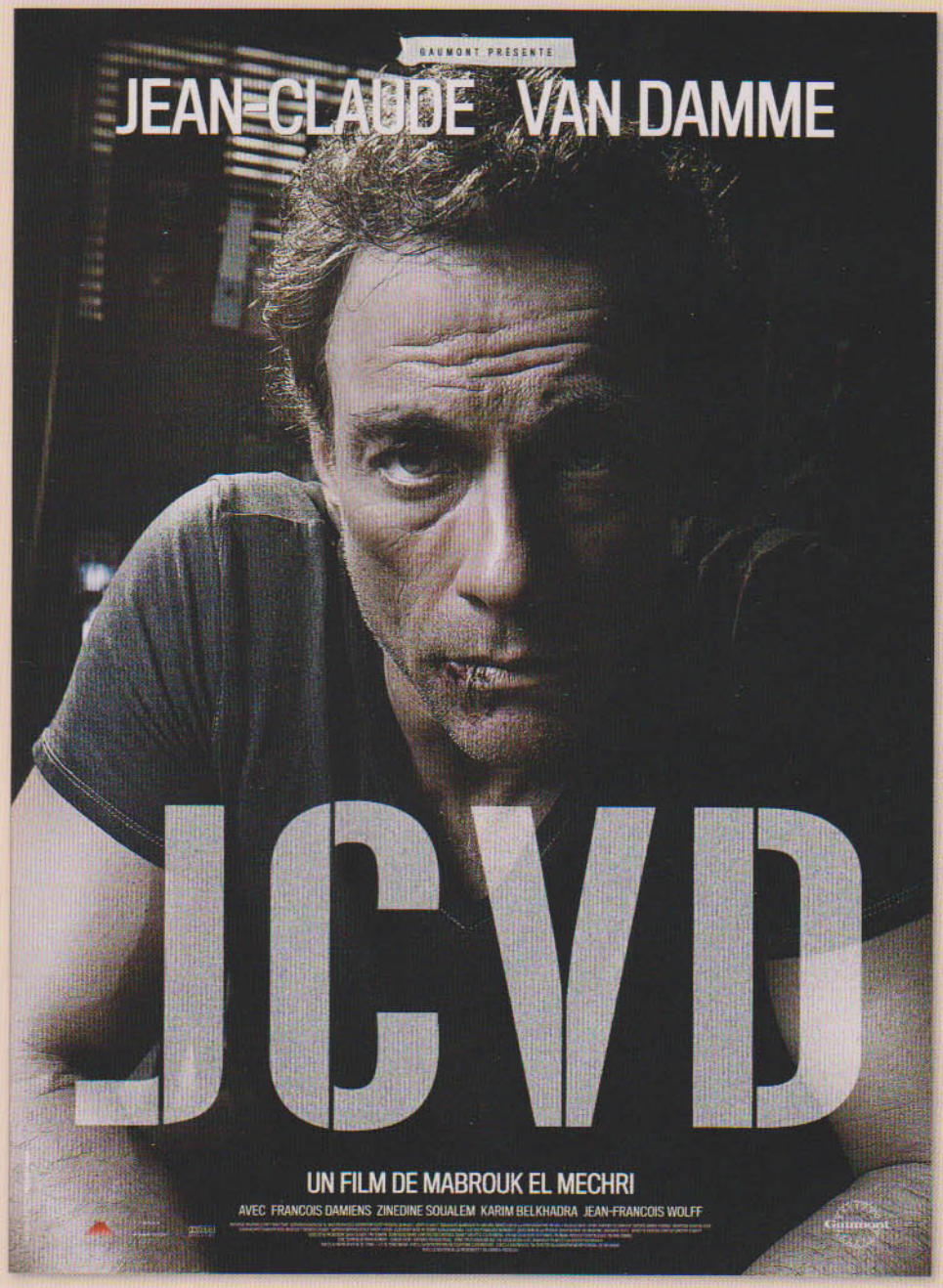
With my cinematographer, William Rexer, I spent a lot of time designing shots that were key moments that were not the language you use in video: moments that were going to demonstrate emotional passages, emotional qualities in the music. So when you get to "Racing in the Street" and it's that breakdown with the band, I wanted that to be one continuous thing, from the point that the organ comes. I wanted that to flow. Because that's how you experience it live. That's how you take it in. Your head goes from left to right, and you just follow the stage. I wanted to have it from the perspective of *being there*.

There are whole stretches like that, where there's no editing. If you look at "Adam Raised a Cain," during that whole chant—we start wide, slowly push in to a close-up, then slowly push back out to the wide. It's editing in camera, which you saw in *Hyde Park*, and that way I could focus in on Bruce and the performance, but also show the full scope of the stage and the band.

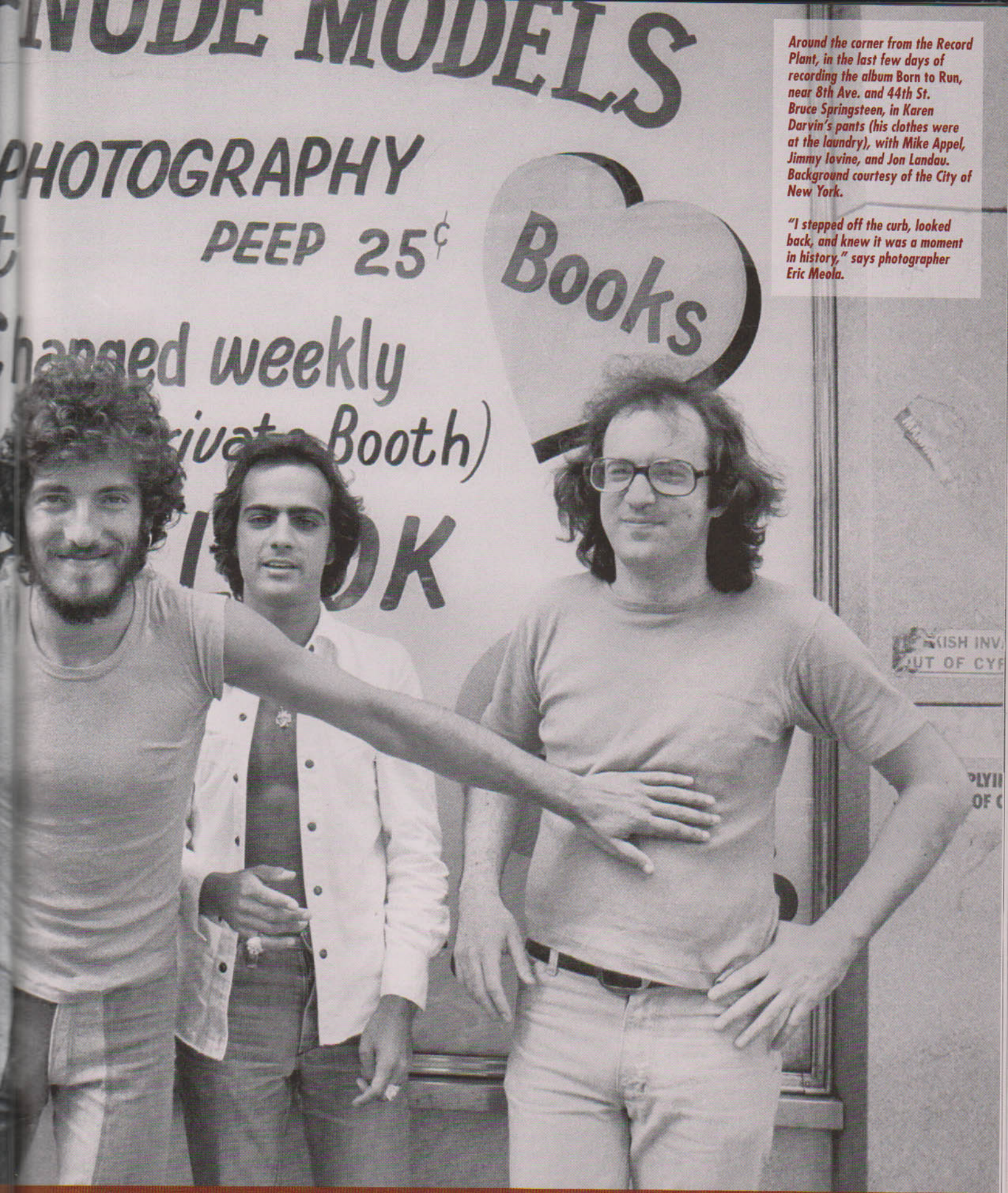
And maybe even more than *Hyde Park*, I think we really get a sense of the band interplay. They're locked in.

I took on the original '78 composition of the band—you see Max behind Bruce, the way the '78 videos are. There's a communication among the E Street Band, and I really looked at the footage that way, to really show that on this edit. You see Bruce wailing away on the guitar, then I deliberately cut away—to Max watching him, or Steven looking at him, they're taking cues and communicating. It's the combination of the band and that E Street language, that secret thing, that I ended up seeing on stage—watching so many shows, first of all, but also being on stage a few times filming them.

Once, during a Magic tour rehearsal, I was in front of Max's kit, and I got caught, not knowing they were going to start a song. All of a sudden this thunderous sound came out, and I was like, *"Whoa."* I thought, *this* is where I would love to film the band, right here. I thought it could never happen—and it never could have, with an audience. So I held on to that memory when making this, because I wanted you to feel like you were in front of Max's kit, and you were feeling the power of the full band.



THE GEOGRAPHY OF OUR YOUTH



Around the corner from the Record Plant, in the last few days of recording the album Born to Run, *near 8th Ave. and 44th St. Bruce Springsteen, in Karen Darvin's pants (his clothes were at the laundry), with Mike Appel, Jimmy Iovine, and Jon Landau. Background courtesy of the City of New York.*

"I stepped off the curb, looked back, and knew it was a moment in history," says photographer Eric Meola.

ERIC MEOLA interviews MIKE APPEL

In 1975, photographer Eric Meola captured an image of Bruce Springsteen and Clarence Clemons that would become one of the most iconic album covers of all time. That album, *Born to Run*, was the last that manager and "stone-cold believer" Mike Appel would have a hand in producing with Springsteen before their infamous legal rift.

Some 34 years later, Meola was astounded to discover that the rift, somehow, appeared to have healed. Springsteen dedicated the 2009 Buffalo, NY performance of *Greetings From Asbury Park, NJ* to his former manager: "the man who got me in the door. Mike Appel is here tonight—Mike, this is for you." At first, Meola honestly thought it was a joke. Since they clearly had some catching up to do, we asked Meola to take the wheel for the first *Backstreets* interview with Mike Appel in 20 years.

Eric Meola: **Let's start with the Super Bowl. It's 1972, and from what I understand, you suggested to the NBC producer in charge that instead of opening the Super Bowl with the national anthem that they should have Bruce Springsteen do "Balboa vs. the Earth Slayer."**

Mike Appel: That's correct.

Now, to put that in perspective—and talk about living in the future—Bruce was 23 years old then. He's past 60 now. Thirty-six years and 36 Super Bowls later, Bruce does the halftime show in 2009. Did you happen to watch it?

Yes, of course.

What did you think? Did you feel vindicated, or did that never enter your mind? What did you think of the performance?

Well, his performance is always electrifying. He's the greatest live performer that ever was—probably, in my estimation, ever will be. So his performance is always great. You can never find fault with that.

As far as feeling vindicated, I actually never gave it a thought until somebody mentioned it to me, and I said, "Well, look... it's a long time coming." I said, "I'm not prescient...." I mean, I couldn't foretell the future. It's just that we were so excited at that time with his talent and with his ability to write sterling lyrics, highly poetic lyrics, that we just felt the sky was the limit.

But he didn't even have an album out at the time.

My attitude always was, and I guess it always will be, that if you're excited about something, it's contagious, and other people will see it, too. *Any literate person up at NBC will see this*—that was my attitude. And when I took Bruce to see John Hammond, Sr., and later Clive Davis, they *did* see it.

I can't say that I'm the only guy that ever "saw" Bruce Springsteen. There were... devotees, shall we say, and they supported him. That's why we hated it when Clive Davis was relieved of his duties at Columbia. We felt we lost an advocate, a champion for Bruce Springsteen—and that was no joke, because we actually did.

I think it was late '71 when Tinker West brought him into your office. First of all, during 1972, Don McLean's "American Pie" was the number one song in America. Looking back at some of the songs that Bruce walked into your office with, some the titles of his unpublished songs were "Tokyo," "The Song Mother," "The Ballad of Elmer the Pea," and the one we just mentioned, "Balboa vs. the Earth Slayer." And he walks into your office....

Did you see the movie *I Walk the Line?*

Sure.

There's that scene where Johnny Cash, played by Joaquin Phoenix, has an audition with Sam Phillips at Sun Records in Memphis. And he sings a song, but he has no conviction whatsoever, and Sam interrupts him and lectures him about putting his heart and soul into the words and making it his own song. That scene reminds me of your version of that day. And you told Bruce, in effect, to go home and write some more songs.

Well, there's no question about it. I had listened to two songs, and neither song hit me. But the second song had something about he and some woman dancing to a silent band, because she was deaf, dumb and blind. I thought that was kind of interesting. And it provoked me—it provoked my thought process for a moment. I said, "If we're gonna have an album deal here, we need way more songs than these two. Is that all you got?" And he said, "Well, I gotta go write more songs."

I said, "Well, yeah, if you want an album, you're gonna have to, and maybe a few more commercial ones as well." So that was what my lecture was to Bruce, if you can call it that. But he didn't take it as a lecture—he just took it as solid advice, and he was going to go back and do something about it. And he did.

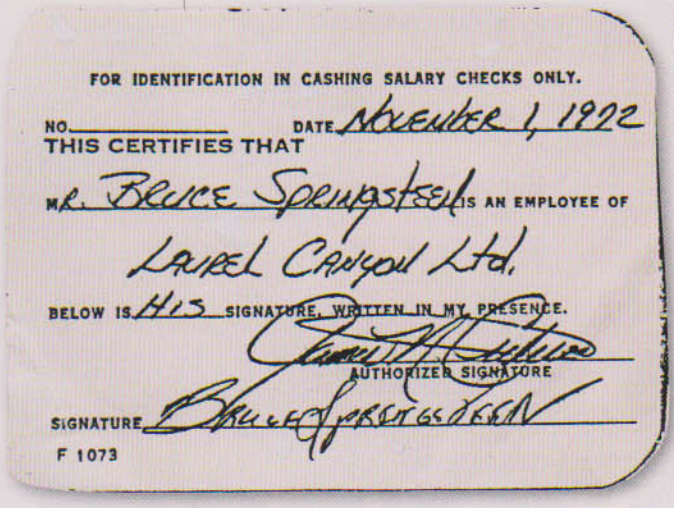
I guess that's what happens when raw talent runs into people that are "in the business," if you will. All of a sudden, that raw talent has to suddenly realize, you know, you're gonna have to shape it a little bit this way and that way to get through this filtering system.

I think to Bruce's credit—first of all, to your credit, for what you told him, and then to his credit—he took your words seriously, and his whole style changed. He became more focused on writing good songs, and...

Traditional song criteria.

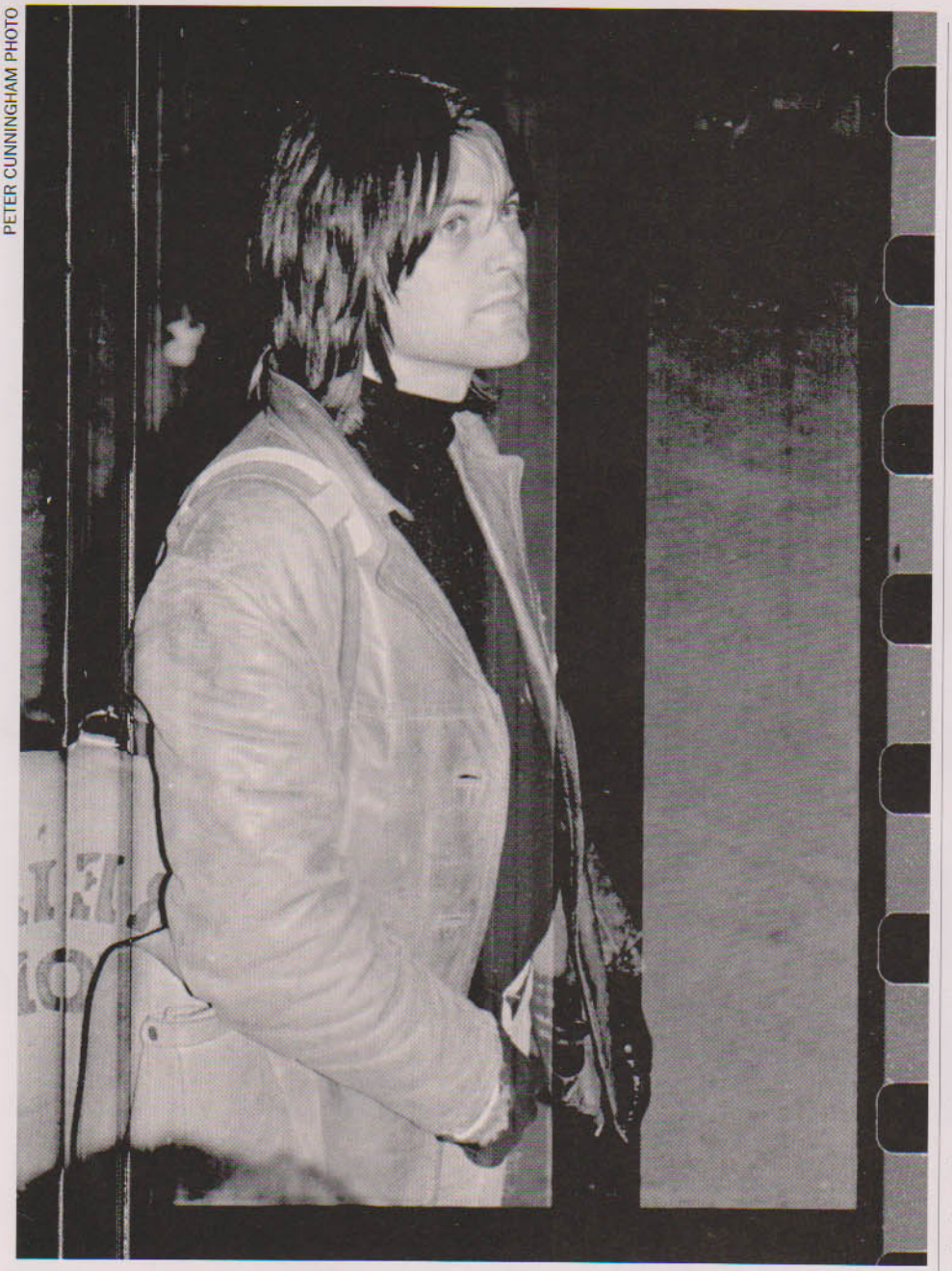
Right.

Absolutely correct. He did do that. I will say this, though: he certainly was not prevented from stretching the normal criteria for songwriting in any way whatsoever. If you look at "Incident on 57th Street," these are not what I would call normal pop song structures. He pushes the envelope just about as far as you can. And then certainly on the third album he did that as well, with


FOR IDENTIFICATION IN CASHING SALARY CHECKS ONLY.
NO. _____ DATE NOVEMBER 1, 1972
THIS CERTIFIES THAT
MR. BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN IS AN EMPLOYEE OF
LAUREL CANYON LTD.
BELOW IS HIS SIGNATURE, WRITTEN IN MY PRESENCE.
AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE
SIGNATURE
F 1073

SPRINGSTEEN'S 1972 LAUREL CANYON ID CARD, COURTESY OF BILLY SMITH

PETER CUNNINGHAM PHOTO



"Jungleland" and "Thunder Road." These are not what I would call normal pop songs.

They were more operatic.

Yeah, they were anthems, to some extent.

I want to get rid of a myth or two here. It's nearly 40 years since you signed Bruce to a long-term contract. The story that's filtered down is that it was signed on the hood of a car. True?

When I heard that, I said to myself, "I didn't know that." I had no idea. I read it somewhere, maybe it was *Backstreets*, I don't remember where, and I said, "On the hood of a car? For Christ's sake, I had no idea."

I just wanted to know what kind of car it was *[laughs]*.

I wasn't present. I have no idea.

Given your own background as a songwriter and that Bruce was virtually unknown at the time, did you consider the terms of the contract to be egregious? And given the passage of time, do you see it any differently now?

No. Let me lay it all out for you. I looked at myself as a producer/publisher at the time, and the people that I had signed myself to were also producer/publishers, so I was acting just like the people who signed me as an artist. I was doing the exact same thing that I had been doing my whole life, so there was nothing new there.

The only thing new was the management situation. The management contract got signed months later. Because I told Bruce, "I'm not a manager." He said, "But I want you to manage me." I said, "But there are guys out there... I just want you to know, I don't know anything about managing."

He didn't care. The managers he had met, he didn't like. He just wanted me to focus on him. To some extent I think Bruce knew when he entered my life—in fact, I *know* he knew this—there were other artists in my life. He was entering an area with other artists. I had just finished an album for Leiber and Stoller down in Nashville for the group called Montana Flintlock, which Tinker [West] also brought to me. We had just signed an artist by the name of Tony Azito to Epic Records. Bruce realized that we were guys that had relationships with record labels and other producers, with publishers, writers... that, hey, these guys are *in*. So we were guys that had "the in" in the record industry, and he knew that.

From what I understand, you had a band yourself called the Camelots. You played, at one point, even if it was for one song, with Jay and the Americans, with Link Wray & His Ray Men... and tell me a little about Hugo & Luigi.

Oh, sure. Hugo & Luigi—in fact, I went to lunch last year with Luigi Creatore.

Hugo has passed away?

Hugo Peretti passed away. Luigi Creatore's still alive, and to make a long story short, he's the guy—he, George David Weiss, and Hugo Peretti wrote "Can't Help Falling in Love" for Elvis. Bruce sings that song. See, there are these little connections with all of us guys in the music industry.

Six degrees of separation.

Yeah, you're damn straight. Like Ralph Gleason, when he was interviewing Hank Williams, Sr., he asked him a question. He said, "Hank, who are your favorite singers?" So Hank mentioned this guy by the name of Bill Darnell. Bill Darnell signed Mike Appel.

Bill Darnell signed me to his label and then later took me over to Herald and Ember Records. Herald and Ember had songs like, you know, Maurice Williams and "Stay." Bruce Springsteen sings that. Jackson Browne had a big hit with "Stay." Al Silver, who owned Herald and Ember, also had "Get a Job," he had "In the Still of the Night." He had all those hits, and he got me over there, and I had this band called The Camelots. We'd play with, like you say, with Jay and the Americans, Link Wray & His Ray Men and all sorts of other people. We played in the south shore of Long Island, and also we went down to Virginia in the case of Link Wray. I played over in New Jersey in front of black audiences. We backed up The Marvelettes. I mean, we were musicians, we did a lot of that stuff. And finally I ran into Hugo and Luigi.

They had just signed Melanie, who was big—she had that "Lay Down (Candles in the Rain)." She was on Columbia. Clive Davis loved her. I wrote some songs with Melanie for Bobby Lewis, who had that "Tossin' and Turnin' All Night," so I was, like you say, involved. And Hugo &

Luigi knew that I had my own band, The Balloon Farm, which recorded a song called "Question of Temperature" on Laurie Records, which was Dion's label, and we had a Top 40 hit.

And then I toured with The Box Tops. I toured with Sly and the Family Stone.

I'm glad that we're getting some of this in here, because I really think that it's important that younger readers who don't know about those times get some sense of your background.

The thing is, nobody comes out of no place. You know, every person has to report from somewhere.

Which brings us to *The Making of Bruce Springsteen*—that's the subtitle of Marc Eliot's book, *Down Thunder Road*. You met Bruce in late '71 for the first time, asked him to go back and write some more songs, and then there were the sessions for *Greetings* at 914 [Sound Studios]. Barely 12 months had gone by, and yet here was this artist with a record contract, about to release his first album—*Greetings* came out in early January of '73. Can you talk a little about what you feel your contribution was in that first year towards, as Marc says, "The Making of Bruce Springsteen"?

Well, what was... sometimes these book titles are...

Well, obviously, I know—I think there are many connotations around the phrase "The Making of Bruce..."

Exactly. But in essence, what we tried to do was keep Bruce and us *alive*. In other words, we tried to get him booked as often as possible and for as much money as possible—and there certainly wasn't much of that at that time. He couldn't command a lot of money. There were some places—you know, if you went down to Virginia, he could even play at a theater and damn near sell the whole place out. So it wasn't like he was a nobody everywhere.

But you're talking about relegating his success to the Northeast—and that was it, basically. You couldn't take him anywhere else in the country. So we tried to book as much as we could here to keep the band alive so that everybody had money and we could get to our next album. And then we'd get an advance toward the recording budget for that next album, and that would keep us alive for a little longer.

So we went hand-to-mouth, day-to-day, and you tried to do everything you possibly could. You tried to set up foreign publishing deals. Hopefully somebody might cover one of his songs—which eventually did happen in the case of "Blinded by the Light" and Manfred Mann. You tried to set up things like that around the world. And of course, you tried to keep the fires stoked at Columbia, especially in the face of the fact that *Greetings From Asbury Park* was no measure of success by anybody's standards.

I mentioned Don McLean and "American Pie," and there was James Taylor—he was the big thing then. He was on the cover of *Time* Magazine, and here you are trying to push this guy Bruce Springsteen.

And again, when we lost Clive Davis—when Columbia dismissed him—that was a big blow to us. He went to what they called Bell Records at the time, then he changed that name to Arista, he signed Barry Manilow, and the rest is history. But it was terrible for us. We were just about forgotten completely, and it forced us to start thinking about how we were going to survive.

There were times when I went back to my office, threw my bag down on the couch, and I just sat there, staring in the dark... and you know, it was funny, because we had wallpapered the entire office with

WHEN WE LOST CLIVE DAVIS, THAT WAS A BIG BLOW TO US. THERE WERE TIMES WHEN I WENT BACK TO MY OFFICE, THREW MY BAG DOWN ON THE COUCH, AND I JUST SAT THERE, STARING IN THE DARK.

Greetings From Asbury Park postcards, right? And I'd sit there in the evening, not knowing what to do with Bruce Springsteen, my life or anything, stare at the walls and say, "Could one man be right and everybody else be wrong?"

And I actually answered the question. I said, "Yes," and I'd storm out the door, knowing that I was right and everybody else was wrong.

On the *Born to Run* 30th anniversary DVD *[Wings for Wheels]*, you graciously gave a lot of credit to Jon Landau, which was really nice, and it was nice of them to have you on there. And on that DVD, Bruce says, "Mike was a stone-cold believer."

Right.

I look at that period and I realize how passionate you were, and I suppose it could be seen as abrasive. But on the other hand, I think it was what you felt needed to be done to get this guy seen.

I always said to myself, "If it's truly great and the guy is truly great, then it's not artifice." It's not a lie. It's not just some advertisement. It's not some company trying to push itself. I'm not a pitchman, so to speak.

Now, it may come off initially as a pitchman. "Oh, he's just talking about his client. Well, what do you expect? He's got a vested interest." The truth of the matter is, I didn't even really think about that at all. My attitude was, "This guy is the greatest. You gotta go see this guy. The songs are killer. You're gonna love this." And that's the way I went out into the world, just *boom*, single-mindedly, wearing blinders, as I've often said.

That's what you do when you're excited, when you are passionate about things, and that passion is contagious. Sooner or later, somebody else listens to it.

One of the anecdotal things that's been passed down is you telling John Hammond, "So you're the guy who signed Dylan, let's see how good you are," or something to that effect. Do you remember, as closely as possible, just what you really said to John?

I said to him, "If you are the guy that discovered Bob Dylan, then you won't miss this." That's what I told him. And he hated that. He had dark sunglasses on the top of his head, right, on his gray crew cut, and he put them down over his eyes. I thought, "Oh god, now he hates my guts." But I had already said it, and he waved me to sit down, and then he asked Bruce to just play.

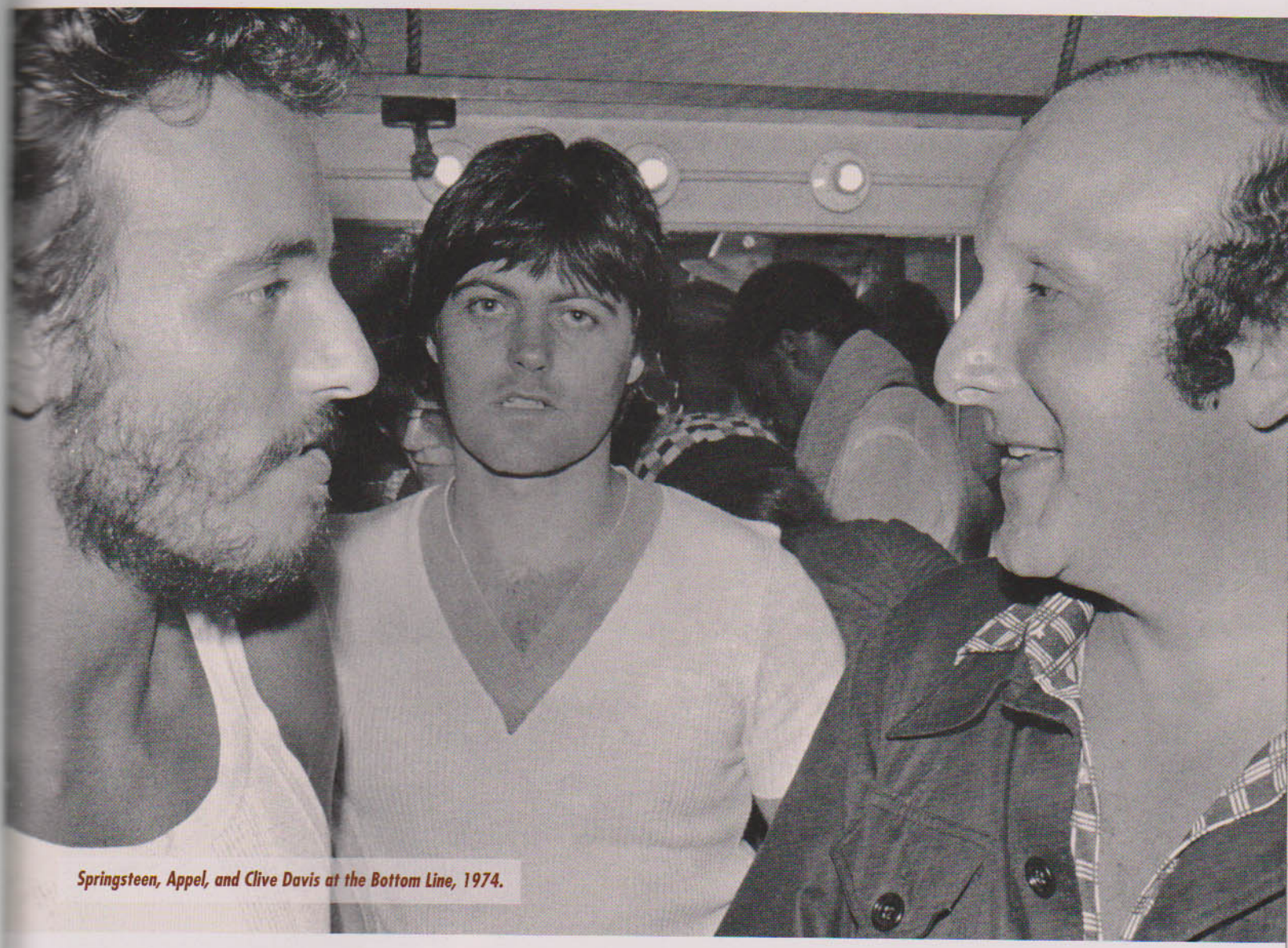
Bruce played "If I was the Priest." It was the first song, and John Hammond, being a Vanderbilt and presumably a Protestant, was probably predisposed against the Catholic Church. And of course Bruce is singing basically an anti-Catholic song, and they just hit it off beautifully. There couldn't have been a better song to start with.

Hammond puts the glasses back up on his head again, and he turns to me and he says, "You're right. Play me another song, Bruce."

He did not miss a thing. He was as excited as we all were. He was just like a big kid. So it didn't matter that he might have been in his 60s or whatever, that didn't mean a damn thing. That guy saw it right away.

Can you talk a bit about the production and the making of *The Wild, the Innocent & the E Street Shuffle?* Because I think a lot of fans feel that it's truly one of the greats. It came out just eight-and-a-half months after *Greetings*, and it's a very different album. There are only seven songs, and as you mentioned, they're very operatic, and on average, they last like seven minutes. The feeling I have is that I'm sure you had a lot of input, but in a way, you let Bruce do what he wanted to do.

Yeah. Well, we always let Bruce do what he wanted to do, because 99 times out of 100, he was right. He has artistic instincts



Springsteen, Appel, and Clive Davis at the Bottom Line, 1974.

PETER CUNNINGHAM PHOTO

that are very good. And in this case, other people's artistic instincts lined up with his. Therefore, there was unanimity in production decisions, and in songwriting direction.

In your Guest DJ spot on E Street Radio, you talked about the genius of Davey Sancious, and how upset you were when he and Boom [drummer Ernest Carter] left. And personally, I think Davey pretty much made the second album—at least musically, in terms of that genius and his piano playing. His soloing on "New York City Serenade" is incredibly soulful.

Oh, yeah. Davey Sancious was a one-of-a-kind character. You're not going to find these guys growing on trees, because they don't.

The violins and the orchestra in "New York City Serenade"—was that your idea? Was that Bruce's? Was it Davey's?

It just came out of where we were: all of a sudden... yeah, let's try the violin, you know? Somebody suggested it—I don't know whether it was me, Bruce, whoever—and we just tried it, and we said, "Oh, that works. That's in. Let's not even think about that one anymore."

Things manifest themselves to you artistically, and then they become part of the foundation of the song. There it is. There's no sense questioning that. We know that's right.

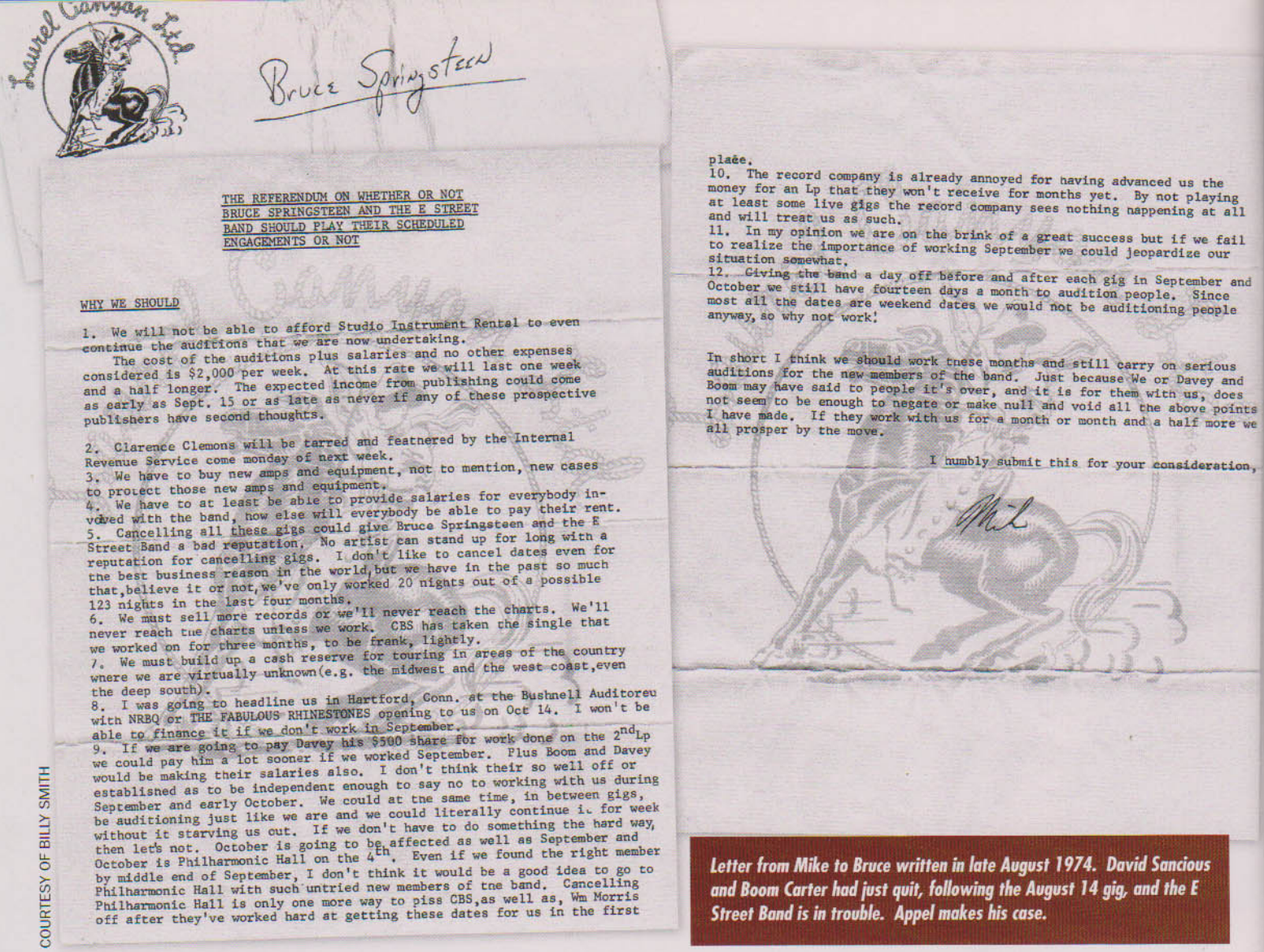
My own personal feeling is, you know, the first album's always the first album, and it's a growing pains kind of thing. That second album... I'm not a music critic, and not that I have to be, but in my humble opinion, it's one of the best he's ever done.

It's more musical than the first one right away—it just is. The first album is a bunch of little songs, so to speak, strung together. The second album starts to be where Bruce tests the limits of some of his abilities. And he starts to experiment and go here, go there—and like you said, nobody stops him.

In those days, you've got to understand... of course, it's nothing like today. Today, they're so consumed with trying to make something palatable for the masses. I don't mean Bruce Springsteen and Jon Landau—I'm just talking about record companies in general and A&R departments in general, and that's the way it's been now for the last ten or 20 years. And when you're so absorbed with trying to take something and shrink it and cut it and edit it and squeeze it into this little hole here, you take all the goodness out of it. And nothing becomes unique, and everything becomes the same old, same old. There is nobody doing anything cool like that where you say, "Hey, this is artistic. I really like this. I'm drawn to this." And then that's the doldrums that the record industry finds itself in today, and you haven't produced a new Davey Sancious anywhere.

I think you might have a Davey Sancious, but as happened with him anyways, someone like that has his own album, and it either sinks or swims on its own.

Well, it's difficult for an album from someone like him to be a mainstream success because, first of all, obviously, you're


Laurel Canyon Ltd.
Bruce Springsteen
THE REFERENDUM ON WHETHER OR NOT
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN AND THE E STREET
BAND SHOULD PLAY THEIR SCHEDULED
ENGAGEMENTS OR NOT
WHY WE SHOULD
1. We will not be able to afford Studio Instrument Rental to even continue the auditions that we are now undertaking.
The cost of the auditions plus salaries and no other expenses considered is $2,000 per week. At this rate we will last one week and a half longer. The expected income from publishing could come as early as Sept. 15 or as late as never if any of these prospective publishers have second thoughts.
2. Clarence Clemons will be tarred and feathered by the Internal Revenue Service come monday of next week.
3. We have to buy new amps and equipment, not to mention, new cases to protect those new amps and equipment.
4. We have to at least be able to provide salaries for everybody involved with the band, how else will everybody be able to pay their rent.
5. Cancelling all these gigs could give Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band a bad reputation. No artist can stand up for long with a reputation for cancelling gigs. I don't like to cancel dates even for the best business reason in the world, but we have in the past so much that, believe it or not, we've only worked 20 nights out of a possible 123 nights in the last four months.
6. We must sell more records or we'll never reach the charts. We'll never reach the charts unless we work. CBS has taken the single that we worked on for three months, to be frank, lightly.
7. We must build up a cash reserve for touring in areas of the country where we are virtually unknown (e.g. the midwest and the west coast, even the deep south).
8. I was going to headline us in Hartford, Conn. at the Bushnell Auditoreu with NRBQ or THE FABULOUS RHINESTONES opening to us on Oct 14. I won't be able to finance it if we don't work in September.
9. If we are going to pay Davey his $500 share for work done on the 2nd Lp we could pay him a lot sooner if we worked September. Plus Boom and Davey would be making their salaries also. I don't think their so well off or established as to be independent enough to say no to working with us during September and early October. We could at the same time, in between gigs, be auditioning just like we are and we could literally continue it for week without it starving us out. If we don't have to do something the hard way, then let's not. October is going to be affected as well as September and October is Philharmonic Hall on the 4th. Even if we found the right member by middle end of September, I don't think it would be a good idea to go to Philharmonic Hall with such untried new members of the band. Cancelling Philharmonic Hall is only one more way to piss CBS, as well as, Wm Morris off after they've worked hard at getting these dates for us in the first place.
10. The record company is already annoyed for having advanced us the money for an Lp that they won't receive for months yet. By not playing at least some live gigs the record company sees nothing happening at all and will treat us as such.
11. In my opinion we are on the brink of a great success but if we fail to realize the importance of working September we could jeopardize our situation somewhat.
12. Giving the band a day off before and after each gig in September and October we still have fourteen days a month to audition people. Since most all the dates are weekend dates we would not be auditioning people anyway, so why not work!
In short I think we should work these months and still carry on serious auditions for the new members of the band. Just because We or Davey and Boom may have said to people it's over, and it is for them with us, does not seem to be enough to negate or make null and void all the above points I have made. If they work with us for a month or month and a half more we all prosper by the move.
I humbly submit this for your consideration,
Mike

COURTESY OF BILLY SMITH

Letter from Mike to Bruce written in late August 1974. David Sancious and Boom Carter had just quit, following the August 14 gig, and the E Street Band is in trouble. Appel makes his case.

dealing with an instrumentalist. And when he does his own thing, he becomes more self-absorbed and a little more obscure than if he's forced into a Bruce Springsteen song structure. Then, he only has a little bit for himself, a little spotlight for himself to shine—and I have found that there are a few musicians who are *extraordinary* musicians when they're forced into that situation. It's almost like what Duke Ellington says, you know, "I don't need more time. I need a deadline."

So it's like, "Davey, look, we need a little something here, can you help us out?" And then he just listens, and he doodles a little bit, and the next thing you know he comes up with some extraordinary thing. You say, "That's it, Davey. You couldn't have done anything better, and nobody could have." And that's what I love about working with musicians like him: forcing them into an area where they would never be in a million years if left to their own devices.

The lyrics were on the first album and left off the second album. Was that a conscious decision or an oversight?

Never an oversight. Everything's conscious. We just didn't feel it was necessary.

That's obviously changed since then—I think the lyrics have been included on every album ever since.

Yeah, but everything was done according to however Bruce wanted it to go down. We took our cue from him.

If I remember correctly, your offices were at 75 East 55th.

That's correct.

Was your office actually [Bob Dylan manager] Albert Grossman's office, or was it above or below his office?

We were above him by, I think, two floors.

And was that just coincidence or a deliberate choice?

Just coincidence *[laughs]*. I always look at it as a part of destiny, like these little things that keep happening and you keep saying to yourself, "How is it that Albert Grossman—of all the people, of all the places he could have picked—he's two floors beneath me and I never know that until months later?" Until I finally run into him in the elevator. You couldn't possibly miss him, because he was pretty big, and he had that big long, gray-haired ponytail. We had a precious small elevator in that building—and KISS, of all people, [had offices there]. Can you imagine what a motley crew that was? *[Laughs]*

One of my fondest memories is walking into your office, which as you mentioned was wallpapered with the *Greetings from the Asbury Park* cover, and you were on the phone with someone and telling them how Bruce had just come up on the bus from Long Branch. I remember thinking, my god, this guy's coming up from Long Branch *on the bus*. I'd had this picture in my mind of this *rock star [laughs]*....

And the part that you were so excited about was this line, "I walked into a Tenth Avenue Freeze-out." I remember you repeating it over and over, and you were so enthusiastic. You were always into the words.

I also have this memory of walking down Madison Avenue with you one day, and you were going on and on about Bruce and comparing him to all these different people. And strangely enough you compared him to Wordsworth, and I was like, *what? [Laughs]* Now, I

PETER CUNNINGHAM PHOTO

Appel, Danny Federici, and Springsteen in the studio for The Wild, the Innocent & the E Street Shuffle, *914 Sound Studios, Blauvelt, NY, 1973.*

Recognize those boots? 914 Sound Studios, Blauvelt, NY, 1973.

PETER CUNNINGHAM PHOTO

assume you knew nothing about William Wordsworth...

Oh, I knew something about Wordsworth, so it wasn't totally inappropriate *[laughs]*. But yeah, Bruce called up one day just out of the blue and says, "Look, I got this new title called "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out." I said, "Love it. Write it." Just like that. "Love it. Write it." And he did.

Another line that I remember that really blew you away was, "We sat with the last of the Duke Street Kings."

Oh god, yeah. That was just a killer line. When he says things like that, all of a sudden it just captures the moment and picture. Such graphic lyrics... like that old song "Last Night When We Were Young." All of a sudden... *last night when we were young*, Jesus... it gives me a certain kind of feeling. There's an aura about it, and an awe. Things like that are things that other artists relate to immediately—and the public, too.

Yeah, everyone gets it.

That's it, everyone gets it. That's right.

In your last interview with *Backstreets*, you spoke with Charles Cross in 1990, and this is a personal thing that I think I knew at one point but had forgotten about: you mentioned that it was your black leather jacket that's on the cover of *Born to Run*.

Right. Though I don't have it anymore, and he doesn't have it anymore.

Was it your idea at the time for him to wear it on the cover?

I just gave it to him, and he decided. He made his mind up about that all by himself. I didn't have much—I don't remember saying, "Hey, you know, you ought to wear that leather jacket for the cover."

Did you guys discuss what would be on the cover, or have any ideas for it at the time?

Well, not entirely. You knew you had song titles, but just "Born to Run," "Jungleland" and "Thunder Road," and those were three pretty big and all-encompassing kind of titles. So you say, well, what is the cover going to do? How is it going to express that, if at all? Should we try to express those titles somehow through some picture or portrayal of that on the cover?

But, no, let's start off by taking some photographs... let's just sort of do that, and then we'll talk about it. And then, the next thing we knew, the famous *Born to Run* photograph—as you well know!

I went over to... what's his name, John—I forget his last name.

[Art director] John Berg.

That's it, John Berg, over at Columbia, and there was your famous picture of Bruce and Clarence leaning against each other, a black and white cover, and we looked at it, and he just folded it over and said, "How about this, Mike?"

And I said, "Geez!" I said, "Goodness sakes.... That's great. That's... you're a genius." That's what I told him.

And he told me he was a genius *[laughs]*.

It's funny, because he lives out near me, and we run into each other every once in a while.

Oh, my goodness, that's great. Well, tell him I said hello. That's funny.

In the Fred Goodman book, *Mansion on the Hill,* Goodman quotes a huge fan of yours: Peter Philbin, Bruce's former Columbia A&R man. Not speaking negatively of you, but trying, like a lot of us have, to come to terms with what happened during that period and to express it in words, he said, "You have to envision the success. You have to try to envision the room that you'll end up in."

If Jon Landau had not come along at that particular point, most likely someone else would have. You beat your head against a wall trying to make someone successful, to get people to listen, and with no success, or little success; and then, all of a sudden, everyone's there at the same time. Was a changing of the guard inevitable?

I would say yes. I'm an artist and a writer myself with my own set of criteria. And when one is to be a producer and/or manager, one has to kind of take a backseat to one's own ideas. Not totally, but one has to sacrifice those ideas at the altar of whoever the artist is that wants producing or managing. What I always felt was—and it's a very delicate line here that I'm about to try to explain—in many instances because I have my own artistic sensibilities, and I would make those clear to Bruce, he wrote better songs because of it.

But down the road, if he, for instance, wanted to make his songs more palatable to a mainstream audience, he might have run into problems with me on that. That might have always been a friction point. Maybe I would've acquiesced and said, "Well, it's his record. It's his songs. It's his life. Who the heck am I to say what's to be artistically here for him?" He's the one that's got to make those decisions, not me.

In my estimation—and I'm trying to look through a crystal ball here—maybe it would've been difficult for me to swallow certain things that artistically I didn't feel were up to snuff down the road. I think that it would've been very hard for us always to be together.

What have been your favorite Springsteen songs down the road?

I always loved "Brilliant Disguise." I always liked "If I Should Fall Behind." Those are some wonderful songs that he's had over the years. I love those songs. I told him so, and he told me that Faith Hill was going to record "If I Should Fall Behind." I don't know if she did, but she should have because it was a great little song. *[Hill's cover of "If I Should Fall Behind" appears on her 1999 album* Breathe *—Ed.]* In any case, those are a couple off the top of my head that I loved.

Not to compare you and Jon, but everyone has made a big thing about what they think Jon's influence has been in terms of getting Bruce to read certain things or taking him to certain movies. Were you more of a hands-off guy and just let Bruce do what he wanted to do? Or did you ever try to focus him, or, I don't know, make him aware of themes outside of the Jersey shore, take him to movies or get him to read books, or were you even aware that he was reading books at the time?

Well, Bruce was a voracious reader. We always knew that he was reading books, all kinds of old books—he liked to read books back from the '30s and '40s. We knew he was an avid reader, so I didn't feel any necessity to say, "Why don't you read this book by this guy or this book by that guy." I wasn't pushing him in those directions, and we were so involved in trying to promote him at the same time.

WHAT BOTHERS ME THE MOST IS THAT I NEVER GOT TO DO A FOURTH OR FIFTH ALBUM TO FIND OUT WHERE WE WOULD GO AFTER *BORN TO RUN.* WHAT WOULD WE HAVE DONE, HAD I BEEN IN THE MIX?

Remember, I had a lot of managerial duties and other duties that had nothing to do with being Bruce's friend and hanging out with him. I didn't have the kind of time that Jon Landau did to hang out with Bruce. And that was great for him. Not necessarily so great for me, because if you just hang out with a guy, you tend to be more friendly with him than if you're this, you know, *business guy,* who's doing this, doing that, doing this, doing that.... And you know, I'm the guy that brings you the bad news: "Well, we didn't get this," or, "We didn't get that." I guess it may have even strained our relationship, finally.

When *Darkness on the Edge of Town* came out, Bruce left the song "The Promise" off of it. But "Streets of Fire" is on the album, and the first line is, "When the night's quiet and you don't care anymore." This may be a little out there, but sometimes I get the feeling that your relationship with Bruce, at least at that time, was sort of like a spurned lover—someone who you love dearly, but we know it was a painful time for Bruce, and it had to be a really painful time for you as well.

Sure.

It's not something you've talked a lot about. I know your feelings were all over the place, with the lawsuit and with this person that you really had, obviously, dearly cared about and tried to promote. Can you talk a little about your feelings at the time?

Well, there's no question that there was a great deal of hurt, and there was a great sense of abandonment. Everybody's gonna go with him, because he's the artist. He's the star. He's the one that goes out on stage. Everybody sees him. They don't see you. [Nobody] saw me, one way or the other, even when I was with Bruce. So you're totally, totally out of the picture now, and now you're left to, like... good luck trying to find another one and build yourself up and find a life.

So, it was very, very, very... you felt deserted. You felt abandoned. It was a hurtful time. I would certainly admit that. And I'm sure it was a hurtful time for him, too. It's not like you can go through these things and one person is fine and the other person is devastated. Usually, both people are devastated to a certain extent.

I guess what bothers me most, from a creative standpoint, is that I never got to do a fourth or a fifth album to find out where we would go after *Born to Run*. What would we have done, had I been in the mix? That's always a little question mark that... you know, it doesn't absorb my time 24 hours a day, seven days a week, but it's something that when I'm talking about it like this, it crops up again.

I want to mention what is, to me, my favorite Mike Appel story of all time. Peter Philbin and I have talked about this before, and to his credit, every time Peter tells the story, he gets a smile on his face, and there's no animosity whatsoever—it's just like, to him, this is the story that really says who Mike Appel was at that time in terms of his passion.

So, the picture is that the auditions are going on—to replace Boom and Davey and eventually choose Max and Roy. I guess this was at Studio Instrument Rentals, not at the Record Plant.

Right, they were at Studio Instrument Rentals.

So you guys were headed back, and you offered Peter a ride. And in the car you said to him, "Look"— you were so excited and thinking about this, about *Born to Run,* and asking, "How many records do you think Bruce is gonna sell?" And at that time, for an album to sell 500,000 records was almost unheard of *[laughs].* And Peter didn't want to be sort of pushed into this

corner, and he said, "Well, I don't know, Mike...." And you pushed him, and you said, "How many?"

And he goes, "I don't know... like, maybe 600,000?" And you go, "Oh, *come on,* Peter!" So Peter ups the ante to 700,000.

You screech to a halt, pull over to the curb and say, "Get out of the car."

Out of the car. Get out of the car!

You leave Peter on the side of the road *[laughs].*

We are not on the same page *[laughs].*

And you peel out, and Peter's there sort of scratching his head.

And I love Peter.

And what came out of that from Peter was, "I love this guy. This guy is amazing." I still cannot believe that story, and I can't believe his reaction—because he just says, "God, he was so passionate, and he really believed. We all believed... but not like Mike."

Well, that record, I think, has sold about 12 million, or 15 million, so it was a little shy.

So you can laugh at it?

Oh, for goodness' sakes, I can laugh at that, sure! Because that was just crazy youth on my part. But I love Peter Philbin—and of course I love Peter Philbin, because he loved Bruce Springsteen. Anybody who loved Bruce Springsteen was a friend of mine, that's for sure. We were kindred spirits.

That's probably the story that best expresses your conviction and what you really believed. Out of all of us, you were the person who was the most visionary in that regard. Yet even if you're Bruce, I don't think any of us ever expected him to not only have as much success, but for it to go on as long as it has. I mean, I know you saw this as almost a never-ending thing and that he was going to be the greatest artist ever; but still, there were days, and months, and literally *years* of doubt that this was all going to come to pass.

Well, there was a great deal of doubt, but it depends on the personality. My personality is naturally optimistic, naturally up. If you are that kind of person, by definition, you're not subject to as much negativity as others are. When the name Bruce Springsteen came up between the second and third album, there was a great deal of doubt from people at the record company, and a great deal of, you know, "Geez, what do we do with these turkeys?" So I had to circumvent that, but I never got down too bad.

Rehearsing in Jersey, Winter 1973.

PETER CUNNINGHAM PHOTO

And Bruce, even if he was down, he wasn't a guy to whine too much. He never would get on the phone and say, "Oh, Mike, man, that news... what you just told me, oh, I'm so devastated." He never was like that. The worst you could say about Bruce, if it's anything negative at all, is that he'd be very quiet and somber all during the day, and then at night when he'd get on that stage, he'd just explode. I guess that was just his way.

But I had an awesome responsibility myself to deliver the goods.

I remember being crazed, personally, and I saw this in anyone who "got" Bruce at the time: everyone was jumping up and down and waving their hands, metaphorically, and people wouldn't listen.

Right. Again, I felt an awesome responsibility there. Bruce used to say, "I carry the psychic load," and I used to say, "Well, geez, I got a load, too. You're not the only one carrying around a burden." That was true. I always felt that I had to make sure that I got this done.

Once he was on the cover of *Time* and *Newsweek* I knew I was done, as far as making mistakes.

We've got to touch on the Anne Murray concert. I know you've told this a million times, but still....

It's like this: we were told by the William Morris agency that we'd have an opportunity to play Central Park and the Wollman Skating Rink, and I said, "Gee, that's great. I'd love to do that." They say, "But Anne Murray would have to headline." I said, "Well, that's terrible." *[Laughs]*

And I tell Hal Ray, who was the William Morris agent at the time, I said, "Hal, it's never going to work because blah, blah, blah...."—I tell him how great Bruce is live.

He's a smoothie, so he says, "Okay, Mike, here's Shep Gordon's telephone number." Manager of Anne Murray. "Give him a call. If he doesn't care, I don't care."

So I called Shep Gordon and he says, "Mike, if you're right, my road manager for Anne Murray will be able to ascertain that. So where is Bruce playing so we can see him?" I said, "Okay great, he's playing at the Bottom Line."

So this guy—and I don't remember his name, he was the road manager for Anne Murray—comes down and sees Bruce. Introduces himself to me, I walk him in, and he sees Bruce, like I always say, tear the wallpaper off of the Bottom Line. He's dancing on tables, it's the greatest live act that anybody could have ever seen in the history of rock 'n' roll, okay? I run right after this guy when he walks out, and I say, "Okay, do you see what I'm talking about?" He says, "There's no problem. She could certainly handle this."

I said, "Are you kidding me? Are you *kidding* me?" I was just adamant about it. "You're going to let Anne Murray close the show, is that what you're saying to me?" He says, "Yeah, and I'm going to tell Shep Gordon she can handle this." I just stood there in front of the Bottom Line, right on Mercer Street, saying this guy's nuts. He's totally nuts. I mean, he's stark-raving-mad *nuts.*

So I called up the William Morris Agency, I told them that they're all nuts, this is ridic-

ulous. I told Shep Gordon. He says, "I gotta go by what my road manager says, Mike." I said, "All right, Shep, okay."

I tell Bruce, "Bruce, you're going to be the opening act, but don't you curtail your show one bit. You do whatever you do, just like you were headlining, okay?"

"Okay, no problem, Mike." That's it, never a thought. He's not trying to bust her chops or anything—he was told go do his normal thing, so he goes out and does his normal thing.

Well, midway into that set, all of a sudden Hal Ray comes over and says to me, "Mike, you've got to get him off the stage." I said, "Are you kidding me? Are you *kidding?* I'm going to go out there and tell this guy to get off the stage? Are you out of your mind? He's got to complete the show, and then Anne Murray can come on. I warned all you guys, I *told* you—you know I did that, Hal."

WHEN BRUCE LEFT AFTER RIPPING UP THAT PLACE, MAYBE A DOZEN PEOPLE WERE SITTING THERE WAITING FOR ANNE MURRAY. IT WAS THE WORST DISASTER I EVER SAW. BUT EVERYBODY WAS FOREWARNED.

He says, "Yeah, but I didn't know it was going to be this bad." Yeah, well what did I tell you? You didn't know it was going to be this bad.... So I told him to just go away—Hal, don't keep annoying me. You're wasting your breath, I'm not going to do a thing. Then Johnny Podell from the William Morris Agency came over. I said, "Johnny, don't go there. Just go away Johnny, it's not going to happen. I'm not going to change my mind for a second, all right?" So he disappears into the night.

Then I'm going up to the lighting booth to be with Marc Brickman, who was doing Bruce's lighting at the time. As I was going up to the lighting booth, climbing this ladder, who's down below me but Shep Gordon, following me up: "You gotta get him off, you've gotta get him off!"

I said, "Shep, will you stop this? There's not enough room on this ladder, and the weight's liable to collapse us, okay? Will you get off the ladder." He's below me—he's literally below me scratching at my feet, hitting my feet, telling me, "You gotta get him off, you gotta get him off!"

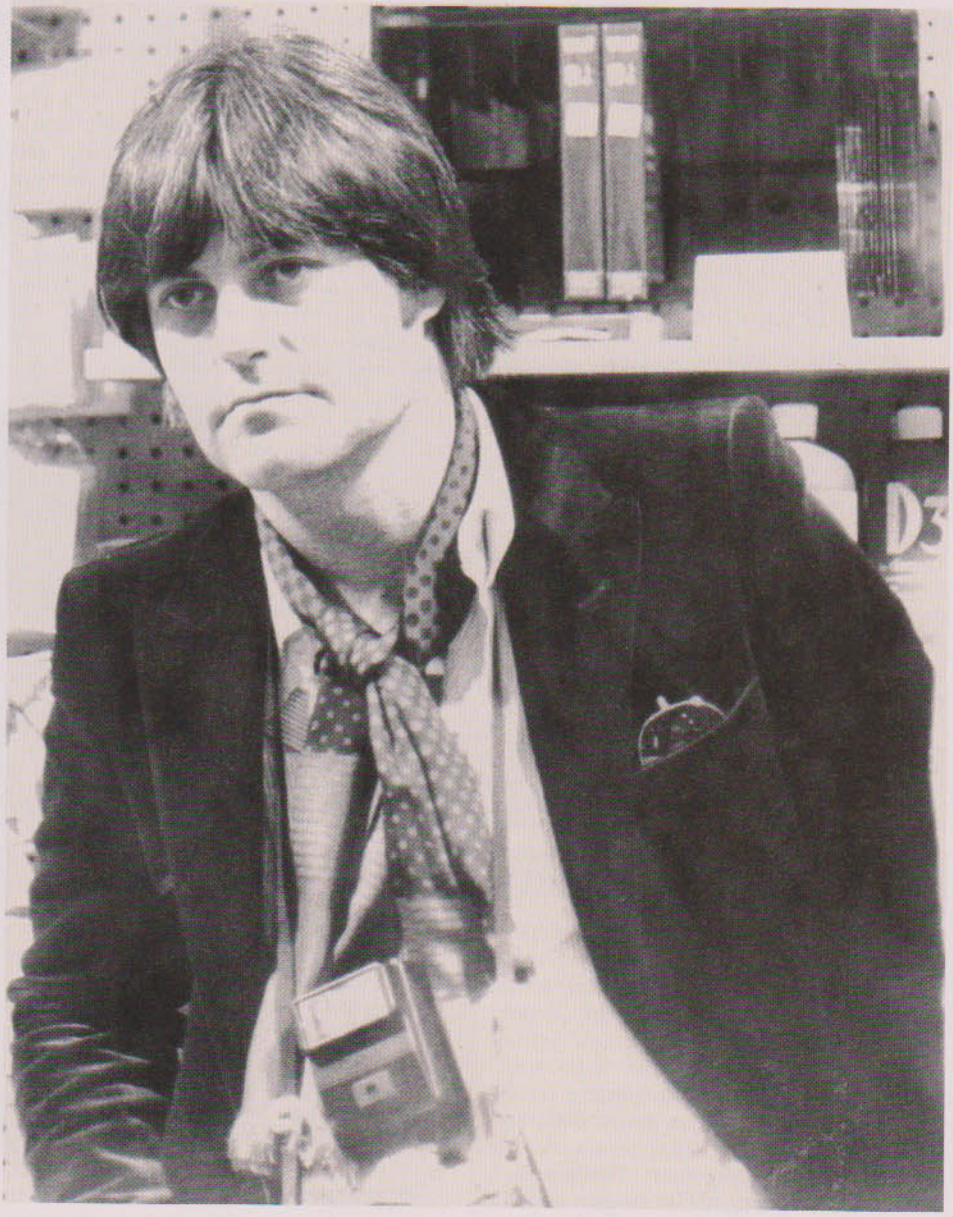
I had this little drill instructor hat on, and I banged him over the head with it several times, right? And then he screamed out, "You're hitting me, you're hitting me, how could you hit me?"

"You're bothering the hell out of me. You were forewarned about everything, and now you want to change everything. It ain't going to happen, Shep, get used to it." *[Laughs]* "Okay?" So he backed down and got off the ladder, and that was the end of it.

Of course, everybody knows that when Bruce left after ripping up that place, maybe a dozen people were still sitting there waiting for Anne to come out. It was the worst disaster I ever saw. But everybody was forewarned.

Now Irving Azoff, he represented John Sebastian at the time, and when I had the same problem with [Sebastian headlining], I called Irving and I said, "Irving, Bruce Springsteen is a killer. You're going to want John Sebastian to go on first." He said, "Let me make a few calls." I said, "Why don't you do this—you call [concert promoter] John Scher, okay? You ask him about whether John should go on first, okay?" He said, "Okay."

He called me back and he says, "No problem, Mike." *[Laughs]* No problem, John will go on first—and he survived. *[Laughs]* John went on, did his songs, walked off, and then Bruce came out and tore the place apart.



COURTESY OF MIKE APPEL

That's funny!

Some managers pay attention, some don't. But it wasn't really Shep Gordon's fault. He was relying on somebody else. And it wasn't Anne Murray's fault.

I think very few people know the story of Sing Sing Prison. Can you tell me about how that came about and what happened?

I remember Peter Knobler went, and Greg [Mitchell, for *Crawdaddy!*].

What happened was this: we knew that we had to start promoting, and so I said to myself, "How can we promote?" Somewhere in my day I ran across something about doing a concert in an unusual place, or something like that. And it struck me: prison. Why don't we do a concert in a prison? Maybe I thought of Johnny Cash and Folsom Prison... but I wasn't thinking of doing a recording there, just a concert.

Sing Sing was something I knew from movies and the news. I finally got in touch with the warden's office, and they liked the idea. I said, "Okay, great." We had to go through all this security, but we went.

And this would have been, what, '72?

Something like that, yeah. Somewhere in '72. *[December 7. —Ed.]* Maybe it was a dining hall at one time, or maybe they'd show movies in that hall. And maybe it could take 800 people, something like that. To make a long story short, we go there with our sound equipment—no lights, just our sound equipment—and we're having audio problems. We're not able to get Bruce's vocals, so he can't sing. He can't sing in Sing Sing! And Clarence just steps right up and just rocks out with Vini on drums and Garry on bass—[they] played instrumentals. An hour, an hour-and-a-half of instrumentals... and they *loved* it.

You're kidding me.

Just loved it. I was so annoyed, I was furious. If I had been 60 years old, I would have died of a heart attack.

Did Bruce ever end up singing?

No. Couldn't. Everybody just rocked and played all kinds of instrumentals. And it worked out absolutely great. That's what I mean about those guys. Those guys are not like... can you imagine any other recording act today, if you put them up and did something like that, and you had a problem like that? They'd *die*. Okay? These guys *make it work*. God almighty, that's what I mean about these guys. They're veterans, they know what to do. They've been on stage, they have a history of instrumentals that they could play.

And they just had a great... *attitude* is the wrong word. They just had a great feeling about life and everything. I mean, if you look at the back of the second album cover, that shot where they're on the porch and it looks like they just came from surfing, that expresses who those guys were.

Exactly. It does.

Bruce delivered a eulogy when Danny died and talked about—and I'm quoting here—"the geography of our youth." And I'm thinking of some of the titles of his recent songs, which are so totally different than his earlier things. And just from the titles alone—"Life Itself," "If I Should Fall Behind," "Kingdom of Days," "Working on a Dream"—we've grown up with this guy. We've gotten married, divorced, made friends, lost friends, and had some of our best times with him always sort of there in the background.

As adults, it seems we're sort of condemned to this purgatory where everything is deadly serious. Were you surprised to see Bruce finally become involved with issues, to become more political? With songs like "The Ghost of Tom Joad," and the songs that are on *Magic*?

America's in a very bad place and has been for a long, long time—20, 30 years at least. We're going downhill, and we're going downhill very fast. So Bruce Springsteen, even though I don't know every aspect of his thinking, I think that he has to stand up and take a position. All I think he's doing is, he feels the necessity to speak up. I think he just feels he just can't let it go by without putting his two cents in, and if he wants to interpose himself in that way, then that's what he's gotta do. He's gotta follow his heart.

EVERYBODY GROWS. LIFE IS A CONSTANT UNFOLDING. I'M CERTAINLY NOT THE SAME PERSON THAT I WAS BACK IN 1975. NEITHER IS JON, AND NEITHER IS BRUCE. THAT'S JUST NOT THE CASE. HOPEFULLY YOU'VE GROWN.

I wrote a song in my new musical, "Truth Will Out," and in that song, I address Washington and everybody there. And I think that artists have to do that. I think that they have a responsibility. I don't think they can be just sitting there on the sidelines and allowing their voice to be trampled by the Wall Street greed.

Can you talk about your musical? You describe *In the Shadows of the King* on your website as being about everyone finding out what is unique about themselves.

Yeah, and I wrote five or six songs that drive that point home, "Stage Door Johnny" being one of those songs. You don't want to be a "stage door Johnny" in your own life, you've got to take control. You've got to see yourself as the center of your life and know what that is.

Most people—like, I'll be at a wedding and I'll start to talk to people. I'll say, "Did any of you guys ever think about what you really loved in life? Did you ever do that?" "No, I just drifted into work, and the next thing I know, I'm working over here and that's what I'm doing with my life." And that's the problem: people drift. Nobody makes a conscious decision about what they want to do. Very few do, let's put it that way.

I started off by thinking about that one day. I had written this song "In the Shadows of the King," and it touches upon that whole idea. In one sense it's like us guys when we all started out. We saw Elvis as, geez, this guy's got everything: the good looks, and the great voice, and the great guitar playing. He's got the songs, he's got the girls... he's got everything any male ever wanted, right?

And you say to yourself, How am I going to ever challenge that? How can I find me? That's him—I can't keep copying this guy. Yeah, I can go out with my band and copy his songs for a while, that's okay. But if I'm going to be in the record industry and I'm going to make records, I can't keep doing that. I've got to find who the hell I am. To successfully come out from the shadows of the King, one has to find one's own originality in the music business, in a musical sense, in a writer's sense, in an artistic sense.

Talking about the general public in a broader way, you have got to think about what it is that you really love—what's close to your heart? And if you find that out, and you're doing something else diametrically opposed, you gotta get out of there. You gotta get out of there and pursue the other thing. I don't say the minute that you discover you want to do something different, you drop everything and you can't afford your rent... you can't do that, no. But you've got to start making the moves to get out from where you are.

Which is what you're doing yourself with this project, with *In the Shadows of the King*, in the first place.

That's right. So I finished it—now I want to launch it. I want to raise the money for it and get it off the ground. That's something I absolutely must do. That's a burden that I feel that I must get off my shoulders, as was Bruce Springsteen at one time. But this is my own particular creation, and I do have to see it through.

Now, that brings up a question in my mind: in 1982, you still owned publishing rights to some of Springsteen's songs, or all the songs on the first three albums.

Right.

COURTESY OF JAMES APPEL

How far we've come: Appel with Springsteen and Landau, all smiles, at the Greetings show in Buffalo, November 22, 2009.

And you finally sold them to Bruce.
Right.

Why did you do that? Aside from maybe needing the money, did you also just need to move on from that relationship at the time?

That is part of it. In other words, you knew that that was causing this rancor, this angst between you and him. And you said to yourself, "It's not worth it." Even though every single artist who ever signed to a record label, they gave up half the publishing, period—I don't care who you were, you gave it up. Over time you might get your songs back, but that's a whole other—that's ten or 15 years later.

But the fact is, I knew that was always a problem. So yeah, I needed some money, but I also knew this was going to be a good thing. This'll stop the angst, the rancor... there won't be any negativity on that score anymore. So let's do that. Let's be intelligent here. And that's what I did. I did that with the production rights as well.

It's been 20 years since you did the last *Backstreets* interview, and it seems that you and Bruce made up since then. You attended the final show of the last tour in Buffalo [November 27, 2009], you got a call from Bruce, as you tell the story on your website. And it blew my mind to hear that Bruce sent out the performance of *Greetings* to you during the show that night: "Tonight's performance is dedicated to the man who got me in the door, Mike Appel." How far we've come!

Did you ever get together and just talk it through? Or have things just evolved through the years?

Kind of both. It has evolved through the years. Everybody grows—you know, life is a constant unfolding. I'm certainly not the same person that I was back in 1975. Neither is Jon, and neither is Bruce. That's just not the case—hopefully. Hopefully, you've grown.

But we have also met any number of times, and I told him I was happy to be part of something that was so strong and has lasted for so long and has reached out to so many people—something that's been a source of joy and exuberance for so many people, besides than the band and Bruce. I'm talking more about his audience and the many people that he's reached.

I said, "You're good for people. When you go and play a gig somewhere, these people come to those gigs with all kinds of problems. There's nobody there without some baggage, everybody's got some problems, but during the course of that two-, three-, four-hour concert, they are totally in love again. They're totally innocent people. They're totally absorbed in what you're doing, and it's positively healing."

You can talk about this diet, that diet, this is healing, this is good for you, take these pills, take the.... Just go to see Bruce Springsteen, okay? You'll feel better, you really will.

Besides Buffalo, have you been to any other E Street shows recently? I mean, do you go once in a while?

Well, I don't go very often. The tickets—getting tickets is a little bit more difficult these days than it was in the past, and I usually give the tickets to my son, who is a complete fanatic and crazy.

It's funny, because I get a lot of friends calling me up, asking me to get tickets, and I say, "Do you know how hard it is to get..."

Yeah, right! It's no easy deal.

Who would've thought it would've come to this, Mike?

Yeah! *[Laughs]* It is what it is, you know? So I don't go that often. But when we were at the Buffalo show, he throws himself into the audience, and they carry him up in the air. They carry him all the way back, and then he runs around, and he runs right by me. I didn't think that he would spot me, because I was just crowded with a load of other people around me—you know, another 400 or 500 people standing all around me. And he sees me, and he comes back by, slaps me right on the hand, boom. *Boom.* You know, just like that. You know, "Hey, Mike, I'm having a ball. Glad to see you here tonight," just like that. And you just say to yourself, "Can one man be allowed to have so much fun so often?" And I said, "I guess so. Here he is. Here's the proof."

ON COLLECTING

Newly uncovered track is a stunner

Stupefy!

By Eddy Wehbe

The internet has become the dominant venue for the trading of collectables and an increasing exchange of information among collectors around the globe. Rarities unearthed around the world can now immediately be revealed online to an international audience, while the wider access afforded by the internet is leading to a reappraisal of rarity, collectability, and value. New gems of previously uncatalogued pressings are still surfacing decades after issue, but what hasn't emerged is a previously unknown or unavailable officially pressed track... until now, that is. The stuff that a collector's dreams are made of—but first, an update on trends and notable sales. 2011 has been a vintage year with much to cover and limited space, so here goes.

COMPACT DISCS: One long-recognized rarity is *The Future of Rock 'n' Roll / 70's to 80's* 1988 Japanese promo 2-CD set, which has long been considered the rarest Springsteen promotional CD. But should this beauty lose its title? In the past year, at least five copies have emerged on eBay and Yahoo! Japan, too many for such a supposedly impossible rarity. Prices have varied between $350 and $800 with several fetching around $500. In a recent poll of 20 of the most active international collectors, it turned out that more collectors own copies of *The Future of Rock 'n' Roll / 70's to 80's* than either the 1992 *The Boss is Back* Japanese promo CD3 or the 1995 "Born to Run"/"Hungry Heart" Japanese promo CD5. Both of these, while undeniably rare, have generally been regarded as more common and less valuable than *The Future of Rock 'n' Roll*... perhaps some reappraisal may be required.

Maybe for the first time ever, a complete set of the 1999 Japanese mini-LP album reissues was made available on eBay.co.uk to U.K.-based buyers only for about $323. All 14 albums were still sealed, and the seller stated that they were a gift from a Japanese record company executive ten years ago. The seller was presumably unaware that this set is much rarer than the similar-looking but way more common 2005 mini-LP reissues. Little did he know that this set is not only sought after by Springsteen collectors but also by mini-LP collectors in general. The first seven albums (through *Nebraska*, plus the *Chimes Of Freedom* EP) are quite common, but the remaining seven (through *In Concert/MTV Plugged*, plus *The Ghost of Tom Joad*) were pulled from production and only made available at Sony as promos; they have fetched prices ranging from $150 to a whopping $510 each in past eBay auctions. The *Live/1975-85* box and *Tunnel of Love* are considered the rarest and most expensive among all 14. This makes the recent sale an absolute bargain, but should it have been auctioned for bids worldwide, who knows what price this set would have achieved?

Other notable CD auctions on eBay included two copies of the super-rare Canadian "American Skin" promo CD-R, which sold for $500 in September 2010 and $390 in January 2011. The Dutch promotional CD-R release of the *Magic Tour Highlights* digital EP fetched around $333 last September, possibly a record high for a non-North American CD-R. A copy of the "Born to Run"/"Hungry Heart" 1995 Japanese promo CD5 referred to above failed to sell for its listed price of $870, though one did sell at auction for a bargain $300. The withdrawn and very rare first commercial U.K. pressing of "Sad Eyes" fetched about $200 last June.

Here's a new "discovery" that some Springsteen fans might have preferred remained undiscovered, at least as far as its content is concerned: *The Remix Tape*, an obscure, ten-track

Various Artists CD compilation issued by CBS Brazil in the early '90s, was revealed to include the only official worldwide release of one of the 1984 Arthur Baker remixes (namely, the Blaster Mix of "Dancing in the Dark") on the digital format. Despite its general rarity/collectability status, this sampler went for less than 70 bucks on eBay.

TAPE: Portions from Springsteen's December 1995 shows in Philadelphia were used on *Columbia Records Radio Hour*, a syndicated radio show broadcast in the U.S. The complete program was issued on a very rare U.S.-only promotional cassette tape titled *Bruce Springsteen: Columbia Records Radio Hour Part 1 & 2*. At least two copies made their way to eBay in 2011, selling at no less than $150 each.

Two of the rarest and most sought-after cassette tape releases appeared on eBay in 2011, and it's been years since either of them had. The first is the Spanish "Sherry Darling"/"Be True" single. Sponsored by Pepsi, it was only released on this format in Spain. A copy in less-than-average condition was auctioned in September and disappointingly realized no more than $80. The second is *The "Live" / The Legend Comes Alive*, a Japan-only promotional sampler issued in very limited quantities. A beautiful copy was auctioned in December with a starting bid of $600, but it remained unsold. This is considered by many to be the most valuable Springsteen release on the format.

Four of Springsteen's albums have been issued on 7-inch reel-to-reel tapes in the U.S.: *Born to Run*, *Darkness on the Edge of Town*, *Nebraska*, and *Born in the U.S.A.* While the first two were sold in stores in the '70s, the last two were only available through the Columbia House record club and have now become collectable rarities. Recently, still-sealed copies of *Nebraska* and *Born in the U.S.A.* were auctioned on eBay. The first fetched just over $200, and the second, which is by far the rarest among all four, fetched just over $100. Tapes are not as sought after as vinyl, and this is obviously reflected in their market price.

ASIAN VINYL: Springsteen has thus far enjoyed relatively modest commercial success in Japan, and this along with excellent, unique, and high-quality releases make a large number of Japanese items highly collectable. A good example is the second pressing of *Greetings From Asbury Park, N.J.* This LP features a unique wrap-around obi cover, and an excellent copy achieved $400 back in January 2011.

Fifteen bids were placed on eBay for an excellent copy of the legendary *Last American Hero From Asbury Park, N.J.*, bringing the final price to more than $1,800 in one of the most important Springsteen auctions on eBay in 2011. Another copy was previously auctioned on Yahoo! Japan in late 2010 and attracted a nice following at 38 bids, but the winning bid was just around $1,300. This Japan-only sampler LP, issued in 1978 to promote Springsteen's fourth album, is one of the rarest and most sought-after Springsteen collect-

ables ever, and these two copies were the first to appear on auction sites for some time.

An excellent copy of the rare *Tunnel of Love* Japanese advance promo LP was snapped up in February for $220 as a "Buy it Now" on eBay and resold via eBay auction two months later for around $470; a further two copies sold for around $275 and $450 on Yahoo! Japan. In December 2011, a copy of the much rarer *Born in the U.S.A.* Japanese advance promo LP achieved $711 on eBay even though it was missing the two insert sheets normally associated with this LP. Also from Japan, an excellent copy of the "Brilliant Disguise"/"Lucky Man" white label promo 7-inch closed at $400 on eBay, but it was surprisingly topped by the $418 achieved in July for a copy of the arguably more common "Born to Run"/"Backstreets" white label promo. The scarcest of the Japan 7-inch singles is the megarare "Santa Claus is Comin' to Town" promo uniquely paired with Barbra Streisand's "White Christmas" on the flip-side. Early in 2011 a mediocre copy fetched almost $800, substantially less than a mint copy could be expected to achieve.

Besides Japan and the Phillipines, Thailand is the only other country in Asia where Bruce appears on official 7-inch releases. There are two known Thai releases, both compilation EPs and both very rare. One of these features "Badlands" and has two label variations, with one of each being sold in the last year or so. A picture sleeve copy with the more common colored label fetched $438 and a copy of the apparently rarer red label version with no picture sleeve fetched $180.

DUTCH VINYL: Two copies of the legendary Dutch "Point Blank"/"Ramrod" appeared on eBay in 2011. The first average-condition copy sold early in the year and was not advertised internationally, achieving only $849. The second, in better condition, sold in September and was fully exposed to the international market; it achieved a very respectable $2,586, the most paid for any Springsteen eBay auction item in 2011.

Another very rare Dutch single is "Badlands"/"Candy's Room," an export pressing for the French market. While quite a few copies came to the market in 2010, this was not the case in 2011, and there was only one low-starting-price eBay auction. This copy achieved "only" around $390 after a 29-bid war. This jewel would've surely scored a higher figure had it been in better condition, but "Badlands"/"Candy's Room" is a good example of a rare collectable that may well be less scarce than generally thought. In this case, the evidence suggests that there does appear to be an impact on value, given that only two or three years ago this was a regular $1,000 item.

It's encouraging to see proof that at least some collectors are following this column: an owner of the rare "Brilliant Disguise"/"Lucky Man" Dutch 7-inch fan club special featured in this column's debut in the spring 2010 issue of *Backstreets* quoted the article in his eBay auction description. We hope he was happy with the $140 he achieved for his very attractive collectable.

The Dutch pressings of "Lucky Town" and "Leap of Faith" must be the rarest 12-inch commercial Springsteen releases in Europe. Toward the end of the year, a copy of each of these sold for around $200 and $230 respectively. The Dutch "Rosalita" 12-inch EP is relatively common and typically changes hands for around $25-30, but add the very rare poster that accompanied early copies and the value shoots up—as demonstrated by the $230 paid for an excellent copy in October.

GERMAN VINYL: Since December 2010, we've seen no fewer than five copies of the German stock issue of the "4th of July, Asbury Park (Sandy)"/"The E Street Shuffle" 7-inch hitting eBay. This is one of the rarest Springsteen 7-inch singles in existence, the first Springsteen single release outside the U.S., and certainly the rarest Springsteen release from Germany. The highest figure, $710, was achieved by a near-mint copy from a U.S. seller; copies in similar condition used to sell for more than $1,000 in the past.

Five early Springsteen 7-inch singles had unique promo releases in Germany with special "Blitzinfo" picture sleeves and labels. These vary in rarity, but all are highly collectable. Several changed hands in 2011 with fairly healthy prices including, most notably, almost $400 for a copy of "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out"/"She's the One."

Another rarity from Germany is *Zur 10. Rockpalastnacht: Danke Schön! - Die Bosse*, a Various Artists promotional LP issued in 1982 to promote CBS Records and the German music television show *Rockpalast*. This release is very sought after among Springsteen collectors as it contains two Springsteen tracks ("Born to Run" and "The River"), features a *River*-era live shot of Bruce on the cover, and name-checks "The Boss" in the title. Over the last two years, only two copies have appeared on eBay, selling for about $110 in late 2009 and $305 in late 2010. This is further proof that Various Artists records, no matter how rare they are, don't often fetch prices as high as single-artist releases.

U.S. VINYL: Recent sales of Bruce's first official single release highlight the value collectors place on the packaging as well as the actual merchandise. An eBay seller separately offered an excellent-condition copy of the famous "Blinded By the Light" picture sleeve and a very-good-condition "Blinded By the Light (mono/stereo)" promo record. Being a highly sought-after rarity, the picture sleeve went for a whisker less than $400, with the white-label vinyl, being a relatively common and frequently sold item, achieving only $68. This level of value was supported by a sale of a slightly inferior copy of the sleeve for $340. Shortly thereafter, a below-average copy of the much rarer orange-label stock counterpart, "Blinded By the Light"/"The Angel," realized $810. This is an extremely rare and sought after gem, and good-condition copies normally fetch more than $1,000, or in some cases double that amount.

In the last year, no fewer than five copies of the U.S. advance promotional "script cover" issue of *Born to Run* have turned up on eBay. The most notable is a copy in near mint condition, containing all the original inserts except the original special mailing envelope. In the last issue we wrote that a copy in such spectacular condition would not appear soon, if ever. We were wrong. Said copy sold in February for the fixed price of $1,635. Another specimen, auctioned in April, did not have all the inserts and was not in perfect condition, but it did include the impossible-to-find mailing envelope. It scored $1,276 after 16 bids. The memorabilia auction website gottahaverockandroll.com auctioned a very nice near-complete copy (missing only the laminated tracklist insert) in December. It realized $1,821 (plus fees).

In 1980, CBS Records' pressing plant in Pitman, NJ issued a Various Artists LP celebrating its 20th birthday. Titled *The Pitman Family of Music: Our First 20 Years*, the record was pressed in limited quantities of reportedly 200 copies and was given out exclusively to employees of the plant. It contains snippets of songs from various Columbia Records artists including a 20-second segment of Springsteen's "Backstreets." In the digital age, the plant celebrated its 30th anniversary and released a Various Artists CD titled *30 Years In Pitman: 1960-1990*, which again contained snippets of songs from various Columbia recordings. This time, Springsteen's share was 30 seconds of "Backstreets" and 30 seconds of "Born in the U.S.A."

Three copies of *The Pitman Family of Music* LP appeared on eBay in 2011. They were sold for $250, $320, and $204 respectively. The first two copies were in near-mint condition, still had their original shrink-wrap on the sleeve, and included the accompanying 16-page booklet. Last October, a U.S. seller auctioned a previously unheard-of picture-disc version of the LP. He claimed that only 10 copies were created for upper management only, and hyped it as "the rarest of the rare picture discs."

The record went for its starting bid of $999, but with the help of a major Bob Dylan collector (Dylan's "The Times They Are a-Changin'" is also included on the record), it was determined that the picture disc version is a fake. The following month, the same seller auctioned a sealed copy of the very rare *30 Years in Pitman* CD. Amazingly, the CD went for its starting bid of $999. Sadly, the legendary Pitman plant was closed by Sony at the end of March 2011, with the loss of around 300 jobs—as one of the local papers described it, "A new Darkness in Pitman."

LATIN AMERICAN VINYL: From South America came some unusual 45s. The Ecuador "Dancing in the Dark"/"Working on the Highway" might not be a super rarity, but its track coupling is unique, and it is the only Springsteen 7-inch known to be released in Ecuador. Two copies of this one went for surprisingly low figures, $88 and $155. Two unusually well-preserved copies of the rare 33 RPM Brazilian "Hungry Heart"/"Stolen Car" sold independently for $175 and $195, while a copy of the extremely rare Costa Rican "Brilliant Disguise"/"Valentine's Day" in near-perfect condition went for a reasonable $787. Another rarity selling for less than expected: a previously undocumented Mexican issue of the "Prove It All Night"/"Factory" 7-inch, in average condition, achieved a little over $300, while a copy of the rare but previously well-documented "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out"/"She's the One" sold for a relatively high $722.

Finally, also out of Costa Rica comes total news: a "57 Channels (And Nothin' On)" one-sided promo. This 7-inch is another previously undocumented and apparently genuine gem most collectors weren't aware of prior to a copy surfacing on eBay last June. The disc features a red *"Disco Promo/No Disponible Para La Venta"* imprint on its white label and comes inside a die-cut white/orange Costa Rica CBS logo sleeve that was also utilized for earlier commercial releases in that country. The final price was $629, perhaps lower than expected, but when a second copy appeared a record price for Latin America of $1,555 was paid. Prior to that the top price for a record from this region was $1,275, paid in late 2010 for a near-perfect copy of the very rare Bolivian *"Born in the U.S.A."* four-track 7-inch EP. Once again by way of contrast, a very poor copy of the same EP in September 2011 attracted a top bid of only $355, whilst a mediocre "Buy it Now" copy attracted no takers with a price tag of $1,200.

There are several rare LPs from this part of the world as well, and one of the most sought after is a very rare blue vinyl pressing of *Born in the U.S.A.* from Colombia. An excellent copy was sold in September for $610.

REST OF THE WORLD VINYL: Two of the rarest pressings from New Zealand were auctioned in late 2010. The "Hungry Heart"/"The River" promo 7-inch, being the most sought-after Springsteen release from Kiwiland, was fittingly sold for $713, and the withdrawn "Fade Away"/"The Ties That Bind" 7-inch, arguably the second rarest, fetched around $257. From South Africa, a very rare 7-inch 4-track promotional EP sampler for the *Live/1975-85* box set sold for $415.

Meanwhile back in North America, small numbers of most of the rare Canadian 7-inch singles were sold with the top price paid being $258 for a copy of the red label Hall of Fame issue of "Born to Run"/"Spirit in the Night," which is much, much rarer than its near identical U.S. counterpart. This is perhaps one of the few rarities where there is a real chance of picking up a very cheap copy—at least if you live in Canada.

Back to Europe and three of Springsteen's favorite countries: Ireland, Italy, and Spain. Ireland's best known collectable is the "Springsteen Pack" of four 7-inch singles sold in a unique PVC display wallet. It's designed to be wall-mounted, and two of the singles come in unique picture sleeves. Each of the sets auctioned in 2011 fetched around $300. An Italian seller achieved a probable record of almost $600 for a stock copy of the Italian "Badlands"/"Something in the Night," all because of an ink promo stamp, never previously noted as being applied to this single. This is approaching twice the price that might normally be expected. The rarest 7-inch from Spain is a unique promo coupling of "Sherry Darling"/"Hungry Heart" which appears very infrequently on eBay, and an excellent copy achieved $437 in November.

Though not the most commonly covered area of collecting, there are some really sought-after 12-inch rarities, mainly from Europe and Japan. A rare Italian "DJ Promo" EP featuring "Hungry Heart" scored an impressive $300. A rare box set issued exclusively for the "Scandinavian Music Club" and containing Dutch pressings of five EPs form the *Born in the U.S.A.* era in less than pristine condition scored a tidy $306 in November with 13 bids.

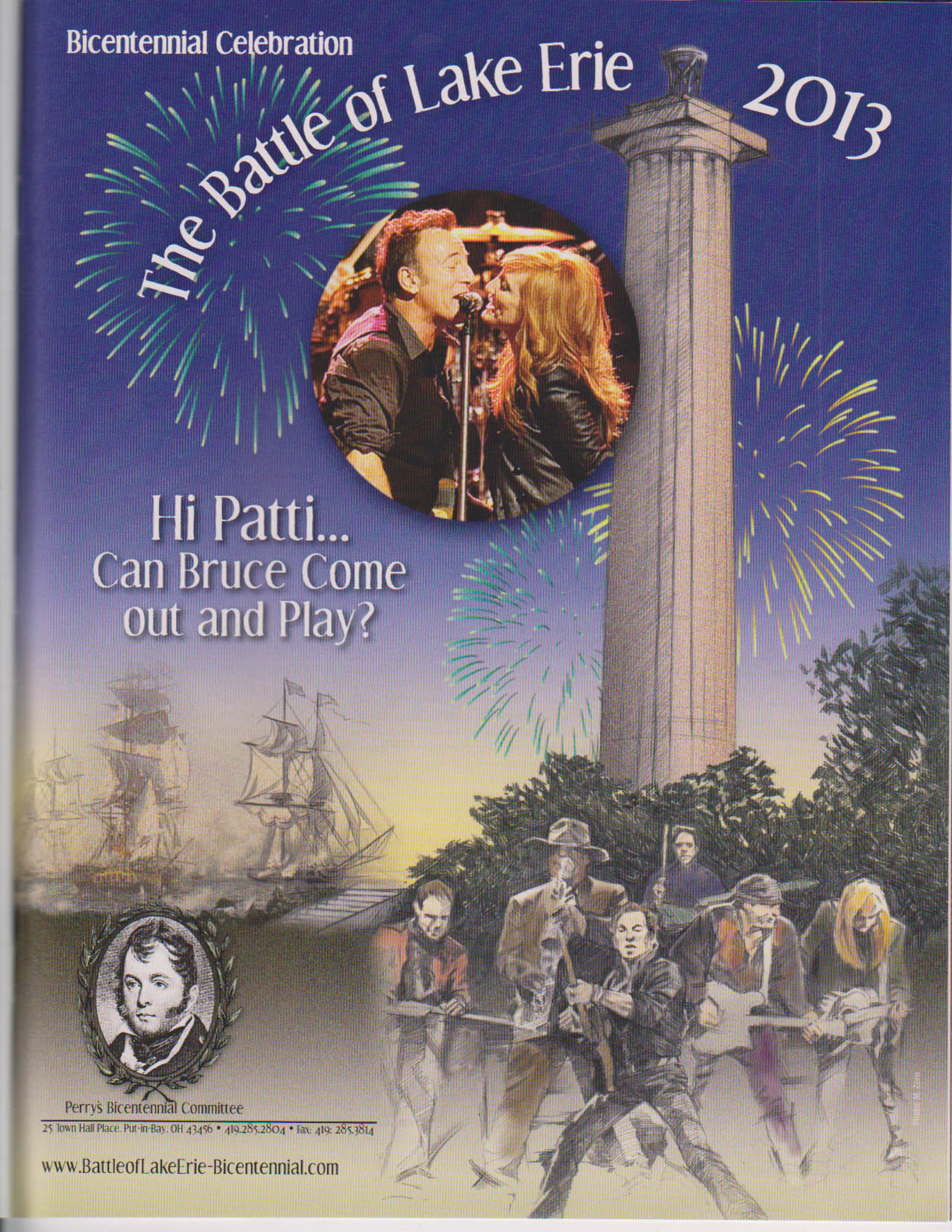
WIZARD IMPS: Of all the different items whose very existence came to light only recently, we have saved the best for last. Via the ever-growing collectors' forum on the Greasy Lake message board, a New York-based Springsteen aficionado introduced an item to his peers that left people with their mouth open in sheer amazement and disbelief. Simply called *Bruce Springsteen – Bonus Tracks*, the U.S. 3-song Columbia in-house promo CD-R at first glance didn't look particularly notable—until you read the title of its first track: "Song For Harry Potter."

This mystery tune turned out to be Bruce's fully-finished studio recording of "I'll Stand By You Always," a ballad he had originally written for his youngest son Sam Ryan in 2001 and later offered for the soundtrack of the first Harry Potter film (*Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*), although it ultimately wasn't used in the movie. The song remains unreleased, unperformed, and uncirculated,

except on this hyper-rare disc, only five copies of which apparently were made and handed out to top executives at Columbia. The remaining two tracks are the same live recordings of "This Hard Land" and "My Hometown" from 2000 that officially appeared on the *Live In New York City* DVD's bonus CD single. We won't even try to put a value on this item, and it is highly unlikely that any of these CD-Rs will ever reach the open collectors' market, anyway; a truly sensational find, if there ever was one.

Interest in Springsteen collectables remains strong regardless of difficult economic times. Values generally appear to be holding up pretty well, if we detect a slight drop off anecdotally. With the release of *The Promise* on limited edition vinyl and the live "Gotta Get That Feeling"/"Racing In the Street ('78)" 10-inch single exclusively for Record Store Day, what about the collectable prospects? Of course, it all depends on just how "limited" a limited edition is, and that is something we don't always know. A reasonable comparison to the *Promise* LP is *Live in New York City*, also a three-record set, and out of print: a lightly used copy in excellent condition could easily fetch upwards of $130, and a still-sealed copy upwards of $180. As for the single, it's worth bearing in mind that sealed copies of the 2009 Record Store Day 7-inch release regularly fetch $40-50 on eBay. So look after these two new records, and maybe we'll be writing about them again in this column before too long.

Additional reporting by Peter Schoefboeck, Mike Simpson, Johnathan Cartwright, Ignacio Casado, Kåre Marstrander, Alessandro Cattaneo, and Massimo Truchet


Bicentennial Celebration
The Battle of Lake Erie
2013
Hi Patti...
Can Bruce Come
out and Play?
Perry's Bicentennial Committee
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UNDER GROUND

By Fred Mills

A Star is Born
(Godfather 2CD)
VENUE: Palace Theater
CITY: Providence, RI
DATE: July 20, 1975
SOUND QUALITY: 8
PERFORMANCE: 8
PACKAGING: 7

From the "Prove It All Night" tour notes section of this magazine's 1989 book *Backstreets Springsteen: The Man and His Music*: "The Born to Run tour opens in Providence after original opening dates at the Beacon Theater in New York City fall through. Miami Steve Van Zandt plays his first show with the E Street Band."

That auspicious historical detail duly noted, perhaps equally significant for this title is its provenance: a drop-dead-superb audience recording taped, according to online sources, by Dan Lampinski, well-known in trading circles for his mid-to-late-'70s high-quality tapes of shows from the New England region. Indeed, this boasts the kind of full-spectrum, full-clarity audio quality that makes many collectors prize audience over FM and line recordings. With the exception of Clarence's sax, the instruments and vocals are evenly mixed and robust, and the crowd noise, while present, is pushed sufficiently to the background even during the quieter passage (the dynamics-rich, 15-minute "New York City Serenade" being particularly instructive—it's exquisite). Godfather packages it all in a tri-fold wallet with a six-panel booklet.

Early gems were still dominating the E Streeters' setlists at the time—"Serenade," "Incident," "Saint," "Growin' Up," "Quarter to Three," etc.— and were joined by a handful of *Born to Run* nuggets the band had been gradually seeding into concertgoers' consciousness: a relatively brief (but funky) "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out," a light-footed "Thunder Road" (which only a few months earlier was still known as "Wings for Wheels"), and a somewhat rushed "Born to Run." Taken together, these tunes and this show provide a tantalizing snapshot of a band on the proverbial cusp and entering a crucial period of transition, one which would accelerate in a few weeks with the release of *Born to Run* and, in another two months, with a twin-cover salute from *Newsweek* and *Time*. The rest, of course, is... you know.

Used Cars... in Detroit
(Anubis 3CDR)
VENUE: Joe Louis Arena
CITY: Detroit, MI
DATE: July 30, 1984
SOUND QUALITY: 5
PERFORMANCE: 8
PACKAGING: 7

A fiery and revealing (and relatively early) Born in the U.S.A. tour show, the first of a two-night stand in Detroit, and one well-worth hearing despite being sourced from an average audience recording. Cleaned up (Anubis indicates this title was remastered from the master tape) and pressed as a pro-CDR, *Used Cars... in Detroit* includes such setlist goodies as "Atlantic City," the titular "Used Cars," the tour debut of "Independence Day," "Fire," an inspired "Backstreets," and a startling cover of the Stones' "Street Fighting Man" (you won't recognize it until the vocal begins).

Worth noting as a reference point: the following evening's concert was released in 2000 by the short-lived UK label Piggham as *No Used Cars in Motor City*, but this, with its similarly-phrased title, sounds a good deal better. The recording is somewhat mid-rangy, but with very clear vocals; a few intermittent flaws are present, including some dropouts and at least one instance of the tape momentarily speeding up, but audience noise is minimal. On balance, still recommended. Pressed in a numbered, limited run of 99 copies, featuring an eight-page color booklet.

Parc Des Princes Magic Night
(Crystal Cat 3CD)
VENUE: Parc Des Princes
CITY: Paris
DATE: June 27, 2008
SOUND QUALITY: 7
PERFORMANCE: 8
PACKAGING: 9

A Magic tour show occurring roughly midway through the 2008 European leg, this stop featured an inspired setlist plus Bruce's familiar Paris guest, American ex-pat Elliot Murphy (who arrived with his son Gaspard Murphy in tow; the two guested on "Born to Run"). Following a powerhouse opening brace ("Adam Raised a Cain," "Radio Nowhere," "No Surrender," "The Promised Land") guaranteed to win the crowd over from the get-go, the E Streeters eased into a set considerably heavier on deep cuts than *Magic* highlights. Standouts include "Rendezvous," "Candy's Room," "Janey Don't You Lose Heart," "For You" performed solo on piano, a fan-requested "Fire," "Darlington County" and "American Land." Anyone wanting a satisfying live career overview as of '08, this boot's for you.

Sonically, *PDPMN* would rate higher than a 7 if it were not for the excessive crowd noise. Crystal Cat obtained a choice recording, but the taper was obviously very close to some serious partiers—the type that like to clap along to *every* tune, even during the softer moments, and frequently way off the beat. Other than that, it's a solid release, one bolstered by five sharp bonus tracks from March/April U.S. shows (notably "Always a Friend" with Alejandro Escovedo and "All Just to Get to You" with Joe Ely, both Houston 4/14). A slick-stock, full-color 20-page booklet plus an insert repro of the handwritten setlist round things out.

Rocking Down the Giants
(Godfather 3CD)
VENUE: Giants Stadium
CITY: East Rutherford, NJ
DATE: October 2, 2009
SOUND QUALITY: 7
PERFORMANCE: 9
PACKAGING: 8

Last issue in this column we reviewed Crystal Cat's *Count Basie Theatre Magic Night*, the 5/7/08 concert that found the E Streeters doing both *Darkness on the Edge of Town* and *Born to Run* in their entirety, a unique experience for all concerned—at the time, at least. Fast-forward a year and a half to the *Working on a Dream* tour: the band is performing *de facto* closing ceremonies at Giants Stadium over the course of five evenings, with a complete album spotlighted each night. On this night it was *Darkness*, and as duly noted in the concert notes at Backstreets.com, the inherent "passion and intensity" of that album was reflected in the performances—"Bruce and the Band realized their challenge, and they rose to the occasion."

There's always been something spellbinding about the *Darkness* material (a fact underscored and magnified by the recent *Promise* box). For yours truly, bootlegs from the '78 tour have always had that rare capacity to bring me to my knees because they brought the album so vividly alive; I knew I was hearing those songs simultaneously stretched to the limit and stripped to the core. And so it is hearing them done some three decades on: pardon the cliché, but this wine was never finer.

The October 2 show was more than just *Darkness*, of course,

from concert-opener "Wrecking Ball" (which had just debuted on September 30) to the requested "I'm Goin' Down" and "Be True" to "Rosalita," just to list a few faves. But *Darkness* is what makes this the must-hear artifact from the Giants run. Sound quality is far from flawless, as the taper apparently was a good distance from the stage, but it won't disappoint.

Seven bonus tracks culled from the other Giants shows fill out disc three. And Godfather has done its usual solid job of packaging, with a tri-fold wallet plus lyrics to "Wrecking Ball" and a four-page booklet. Although as with a number of other recent Godfather titles, we have to point that liner notesman "Joe Roberts" lifted several paragraphs verbatim from the Backstreets.com review originally penned by Dante Cutrona. Some of the photos look suspiciously familiar, too.

Out On a Midnight Run
(Godfather 3CD)
VENUE: 1st Mariner Arena
CITY: Baltimore, MD
DATE: November 20, 2009
SOUND QUALITY: 7.5
PERFORMANCE: 8
PACKAGING: 8

Baltimore got the penultimate show of 2009, and they also got *Born to Run*: not a bad bargain for a city that the E Street Band hasn't played since the early '70s. Over three hours later, it's a fair bet that the wait was, as the saying goes, worth it. The lead-in to *BTR*—"Wrecking Ball," "Prove It All Night," "Hungry Heart" (Baltimore, natch!), "Working on a Dream"—sets the album up perfectly. Later, the segment coming directly after *BTR*—"Sunny Day," "Spirit," a surprise cover of "Green Onions," "Santa Claus"—lightens and brightens the mood en route to the band shifting into full-tilt party mode. At that point they're proverbially tight-but-loose, with Bruce & Co. bobbing, weaving, shuffling and strutting their way to an astonishing eight-song encore. "Glory Days" closes things out, which is just about perfect.

Sound-wise, *Midnight Run*'s chief downside is crowd noise in the proximity of the taper, particularly noticeable during softer packages. Otherwise, it's a dynamic, very clean recording. No bonus tracks for this release, given the length of the concert. Packaging, booklet, etc. are comparable to other recent Godfather releases—including liner notes in which the label's "Joe Roberts" lifts content directly from the Backstreets.com concert reviews (here, virtually the entirety of the notes). C'mon, Godfather, we understand the nature of the beast, but other labels have often provided proper credit when tapping *Backstreets* content, and there's no reason you can't do likewise. Get in touch: we need to have a sit-down.

Frankfurt Dream Night
(Crystal Cat 4CD)
VENUE: Commerzbank Arena
CITY: Frankfurt, Germany
DATE: July 3, 2009
SOUND QUALITY: 9
PERFORMANCE: 9
PACKAGING: 10

It's not a stretch to say that this Working on a Dream tour audience recording tilts very, very close to a 10 in terms of sound quality, with only some modest crowd noise surfacing during softer passages. For an underground release, *Frankfurt Dream Night* will take your breath away. It's also superbly representative of what the E Streeters were all about on this European leg: plenty of crowd-pleasers, a sprinkling of vault goodies (e.g., "Trapped," "Point Blank" and, most notably, "Factory"), wholly engaged renditions of all. Speaking of which: the version of "Jungleland" here is as simultaneously rousing and elegiac as any recent Springsteen performance in memory.

Bonus-wise, disc three includes 11 tracks from the prior night's show in Munich—no duplications from Frankfurt—and although the sound quality is a tad noisier, the tunes are no less enjoyable, notably "Seven Nights to Rock," "Pretty Woman" and "The River."

But wait, there's more: next up is disc four, offered as a free bonus CD, with broadcast-quality tracks: seven from Frankfurt that went out on Sirius Satellite Radio, and five which aired on French radio hailing from the July 16 show in Carhaix, France. The audio quality on these is outstanding—iPod worthy, even, for all you earbud aficionados out there. A whopping 24-page booklet, along with a two-sided fold-out mini-poster, puts the total package over the top.

Preview:
The Unbroken Promise

Next issue, we'll look at the six-CD box set from Godfather, *The Unbroken Promise: Lighting Up the* Darkness *Sessions*. It is, in a word, awesome—as much for the packaging (three tri-fold wallets containing the six discs, a 48-page book with exhaustive track-by-track annotations, and a mini-poster, all housed in a six-inch-square box) as for the actual musical contents. This set serves as a fascinating companion piece to the official 3CD/3DVD *Darkness* box, boasting as it does *72 additional* tracks' worth of unreleased outtakes and alternate versions (with an emphasis on the latter) from *Darkness*-era sessions. Much of this material has surfaced on previous boots, of course, including some released by Godfather, but having it all in one concise package is pure collector catnip. Full report in *Backstreets* #91.

the backstreets jukebox

1. Bruce Springsteen
The Promise
Columbia (2CD)

2. Eddie Vedder
Ukulele Songs
Monkeywrench (CD)

3. The Jayhawks
Mockingbird Time
Rounder (LP)

4. Superchunk
Majesty Shredding
Merge (LP)

5. The Bomb
Speed is Everything
No Idea (CD)

6. Twilight Singers
Dynamite Steps
Sub Pop (CD)

7. Elbow
Build a Rocket Boys!
Fiction/Polydor (CD)

8. Screaming Trees
Last Words
Sunyata (CD)

9. Tom Waits
Bad as Me
Epitaph (LP)

10. Groove Armada
Black Light
Cooking Vinyl (CD)

10 records that helped make this issue possible

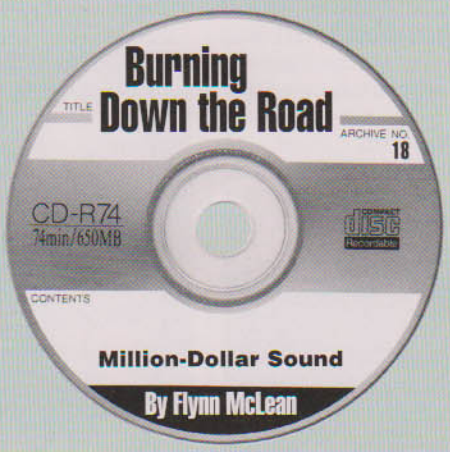
Pick whichever cliché you want—good things come to those who wait, saving the best for last, faith will be rewarded—but two of the best recordings from the 2009 Working on a Dream tour surfaced about a year and a half after the last stop in Buffalo. And that Buffalo grand finale, not-so-incidentally, is one of the shows. In the spring of 2011, Crystal Cat released *New York City First Dream Night* and *Greetings From Buffalo Dream Night*, both sourced from pristine wireless/audience mixed recordings so good they could easily be taken for soundboards.

This is not the first release from Crystal Cat of that November 7, 2009, Madison Square Garden show (their previous set was audience-sourced). In fact, the feline released this new version with the same catalog number as their previous release and kept the bonus tracks (from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame shows the previous month) intact. Unfortunately, that means that discs one and two are still frustratingly split between "Incident on 57th Street" and "Rosalita." A talented and generous bit-torrenter, however, fixed that little problem by seamlessly re-tracking the discs, leaving the bonus tracks off, and making that modified version available.

To refresh memories, the featured album that night was *The Wild, the Innocent & the E Street Shuffle*, and if any show deserved—no, *needed*—to be heard in beautiful quality with excellent instrument separation, it's this one. You can hear every horn on "Kitty's Back" and every piano note on "Incident on 57th Street" (including the final flourish from Roy just as Bruce cranks the opening riff to "Rosalita"). The shining jewel, though, is the beautiful "New York City Serenade," which featured an eight-piece string section as well as congas from Richard Blackwell, all of which can be heard in exquisite clarity. The rest of the show doesn't disappoint, either, with an opening "Thundercrack," a thunderous "Seeds," and a request section that included "Does This Bus Stop at 82nd Street?" and "Human Touch." This one is a must-have.

The second Crystal Cat release is from the November 22, 2009, show in Buffalo, NY, where Bruce went back to where it all began with the featured album being *Greetings from Asbury Park, NJ*. There was no shortage of audience recordings from this show, but this new wireless source is miles ahead of all of them. The amazing clarity on "The Angel," a one-time candidate for weakest song in the Springsteen catalog, provides a new perspective on the song, and this might have been the best performance of "Lost in the Flood" since the Reunion tour finale.

Of course, with Buffalo being a tour finale, and the end of nearly two straight years of touring, Bruce had more than a couple of surprises up his sleeve: "Restless Nights" and "Surprise, Surprise" for birthday boy Little Steven, "I'll Work For Your Love" to open the encore, a request section that not only brought us a double-shot of holiday fun with "Santa Claus" and "Merry Christmas Baby" but also two greats covers in "(I Don't Wanna) Hang Up My Rock and Roll Shoes" and "Boom Boom." At 34 songs total, it was one of the longest shows of the decade. If there's one knock against this release, it's that Roy's piano is barely audible throughout the show; but everything else is there, including the perfect amount of audience.



Crystal Cat also came up with five tracks from the May 8, 2009, show at Penn State, for which no recording had previously circulated. These songs—"My Generation," "The Wrestler," "This Life," "Detroit Medley," and "Wooly Bully"—are from a wireless recording, although one not mixed with an audience source. The single source gives them a slightly sterile sound, especially when compared to the Buffalo recording, but the uniqueness of the songs and the excellent balance of the instruments more than compensate.

With Crystal Cat releasing its wireless source of the Buffalo show, Hoserama made his own mix available through the torrent sites, and there is definitely a contrast between the two. Hoserama's mix has more piano and organ than the Crystal Cat, but also has less audience. Which one is better will be up to the individual listener's preferences, but this reviewer does prefer the one with more audience in the mix.

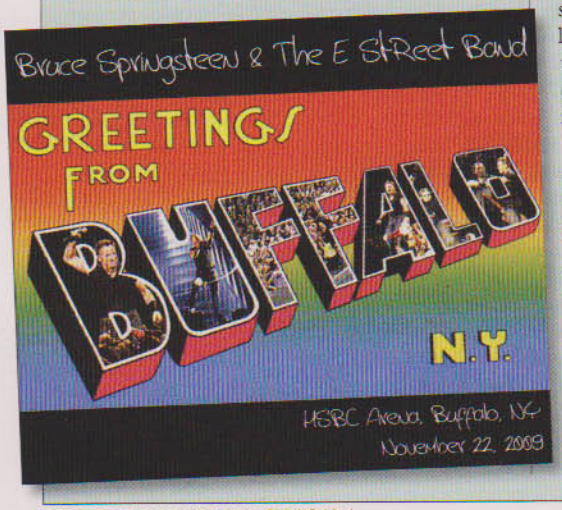
Hoserama had been very busy over the last year, to say the least. In addition to creating the Buffalo mix, he also mixed and released the April 15, 2009, show from Los Angeles. For those keeping score, Hoserama had previously released the second of the two LA shows, so now he completes the stand with an excellent mix. The first night in LA was pretty typical of the opening month of the tour, with the opening "Badlands" and the "Recession Pack," but what makes this show shine a bit more than others is the trio of "The Wrestler," "Racing in the Street," and "Kingdom of Days" in the second part of the main set; the emotional arc of those songs gave this particular show a gravitas not seen during most of the tour. In addition, Tom Morello guested on "The Ghost of Tom Joad," recreating the released version recorded 53 weeks earlier, and "Hard Times."

Crystal Cat's release of the complete *Wild & Innocent* show was not a total surprise, as the album portion of the performance was included in a batch of releases from the previously-unheard-of silver disc label Social Graces from the fall 2009 tour. These releases contain only the album performances from four different shows: *Darkness at Giants Stadium* has the *Darkness on the Edge of Town* album set (October 2, 2009, East Rutherford, NJ); *Born Again* the *Born to Run* set (November 13, 2009, Auburn Hills, MI), and *Innocent and Glory Days*, as the title suggests, packages the *Wild & Innocent* (November 7, 2009, New York, NY) and *Born in the U.S.A.* (October 3, 2009, East Rutherford, NJ) sets together. These three titles are labeled soundboards, but they are really some sort of wireless recordings—the sharpest, most balanced wireless recordings we've ever heard.

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN & THE E STREET BAND
BORN AGAIN
LIVE
AT THE PALACE, AUBURN HILLS, MICHIGAN, USA
13TH NOVEMBER 2009
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN & THE E STREET BAND
INNOCENT AND GLORY DAYS
STEREO SOUNDBOARD RECORDING

The way these recordings surfaced was quite unusual. Although teasers by bootleg distributors were posted (sans distributor information, of course) to Springsteen message boards in mid-October 2010, the tracks first surfaced as high-quality mp3 downloads from a website that covers "recordings of independent origin" of all artists, not just Bruce, in early November. The silver versions apparently didn't circulate until late December 2010. Additionally, all of the discs include what can only be described as an eclectic mix of bonus tracks, including a couple of songs from Gothenberg, Sweden, from June 2003, two songs from the February 19, 2003, Somerville show, Bruce's guest appearance with Phish from Bonnaroo in 2009, and a handful of songs from closed rehearsals from Convention Hall in March 2009, all sourced from wireless or possibly even soundboard recordings.

Just as the album-portion release of the *Wild & Innocent* performance was a teaser for



the release of the complete show, the bonus tracks from the Social Graces releases from the Somerville show served a similar purpose: a soundboard or wireless recording of the February 19, 2003, show surfaced in spring 2011, titled *Somerville Story*. It's not quite complete: the intro and the first song ("Darkness") are taken from an audience recording, and the Question and Answer portion of the show has been eliminated all together (which is disappointing if only for missing the snippet of "Back in Your Arms"). The two-night Somerville stand was unique for a variety of reasons, not the least of which was that it served as a career retrospective from Bruce's own viewpoint, and he talked about the various influences and thought-processes that went into each song. This stellar, pristine soundboard/wireless recording is head and shoulders above the previous releases of this show, including Crystal Cat's *DoubleTake Night*.

With the big *The Promise* box set finally seeing the light of day, it's not a surprise that some *Darkness*-era shows and recordings received some renewed attention. The second release of the JEMS Darkness Tour Masters Revisited series is a fresh transfer of the September 1, 1978, show from Detroit. Just like Volume One (the December 20, 1978, show from Seattle), JEMS went back to the original master tapes and digitally transferred them at the highest possible quality, and again, the results are stunning. This tape had been around for years and was released on CD in the late '90s under the title *Darkness at Heartbreak Hotel*, but this fresh transfer, titled *Wild Cathedral Evening*, is a marked upgrade of anything that had circulated previously. The sound is fuller and punchier with the crispness that defines a master. The show itself included all the hallmarks of the great '78 shows—"Streets of Fire," the extended intro to "Prove It All Night," "Mona" segueing into "She's the One," etc.—plus a piano-only arrangement of "Lost in the Flood" and the debut of "Chimes of Freedom," which Bruce didn't play again until the European leg of the Tunnel of Love Express Tour ten years later. Add in the opening "Good Rockin' Tonight," the not-rare-but-still-great "Heartbreak Hotel," and the one-two punch of "Candy's Room" and "Adam Raised a Cain" in the second set, and it stands out as a pretty unique show.

Another classic '78 show for which we have a fresh transfer is the classic broadcast of the July 7, 1978, show from the Roxy in Los Angeles, this one courtesy of Essexboy and his secret stash in his loft. The new source is a very low generation cassette tape of the broadcast, so it's not going to sound tremendously better than existing recordings, including Crystal Cat's excellent *Roxy Night*. But the low generation tape and the fact that absolutely no audio processing was performed to the recording combine to provide the *cleanest* representation we've heard of this show thus far. It may not sound as full as *Roxy Night*, but it doesn't sound as processed, either. We keep hoping, though, that a pre-air tape, similar to those from the Agora, Passaic, and Winterland broadcasts, will eventually surface from this show. (Or Bruce Inc. could just release it themselves).

When rumors began circulating that *The Promise* might include a significant amount of outtakes and alternate takes from the *Darkness* sessions, one fan pulled out some of those long-circulating studio tracks and cleaned them up as much as possible; the results were a welcome addition—or at least got us more excited for the long-awaited release of the official box. Of the 15 songs uploaded by Bluetele, eight wound up included on *The Promise*. And despite that redundancy, the upload reminded many of how great some of those songs are and increased the anticipation among fans as they imagined this material in official release quality.

Staying on the subject of studio outtakes, JEMS and Ev2 teamed up to provide a fresh perspective on some *Born in the U.S.A.* outtakes and alternate takes on *Tape Deck Blastin'*. The recordings previously appeared on several mid-'80s vinyl bootlegs *(Studio Quality Built In,* most notably) and the early 1990s CD bootleg *This Hard Land*, so the material is well-known, but for this release, a digital copy of the original cassette tape was the source. What this tape represents is a possible early track listing for the album that would eventually be released as *Born in the U.S.A.* As Wayne Darlington writes in the liner notes, a handwritten tentative track listing on display at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland features these songs in the same order (although with "Johnny Bye Bye" as the album closer rather than "Darlington County"). While we may never know how close this line-up of songs came to being released, we can feel pretty certain it was at least considered, even if for only for the time it took Bruce to compose that list.

The recordings in this particular batch have a rawer feel than what was eventually released, with a harder vocal edge from Bruce and a more pronounced guitar sound. Most of the songs are longer than their released counterparts, particularly "Born in the U.S.A.," which features a musical outro nearly four minutes longer than the official track, with considerable interplay between Bruce and Max. "Glory Days" has an extra verse about the narrator's father losing his job at the local automobile assembly plant, a verse which changes the tone of the song considerably. "I'm Goin' Down" and "I'm on Fire" both include extended musical intros and outros, and "Downbound Train" has a slightly different mix with an acoustic guitar prominent in the bridge and additional "vocal howls" from Bruce.

Returning to the topic of wireless recordings, we jump back a few years for three such recordings from the Devils & Dust tour: Portland, OR and Seattle, WA, from August 10 and 11, 2005, respectively, and the penultimate show in Trenton, NJ, on November 21, 2005. As with previous wireless recordings from the solo tour, the mix isn't close to ideal: the instruments often overpower the vocals, especially on the piano songs; there is little-to-no audience in the mix (which can be good or bad, depending upon your perspective); and there is occasional crew chatter throughout. On the other hand, the music and vocals, albeit slightly unbalanced at times, are crystal clear: you can hear every breath and every note from Bruce. Both the Portland and Trenton recordings were mixed with good audience tapes, hiding many of the wireless flaws and adding a welcome ambience to the mix.

One recording that seems to have flown underneath the radar is a wireless/audience mix of the April 9, 2000 show from Kansas City, MO. Early April found the 2000 tour picking up momentum that wouldn't end until the tour concluded on July 1, and the show in Kansas City was a major part of that movement, with an opening "Take 'Em as They Come" and a post-"Tenth Avenue" two-fer of "Downbound Train" and "Candy's Room." And, as we've said before, any show that includes "Racing in the Street" is going to up a notch or two. While an excellent audience recording from Kansas City has long circulated, the wireless source adds a presence that makes it one of the better recordings from the Reunion tour.

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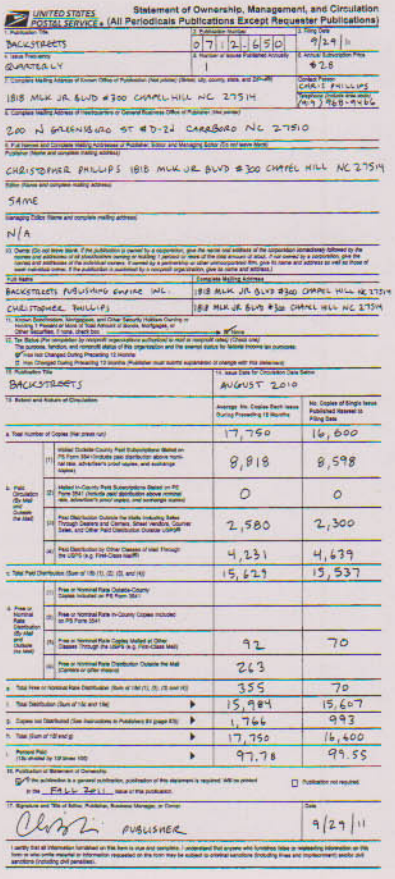

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13. Publication Title: BACKSTREETS — 14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: AUGUST 2010

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)		17,750	16,600
b. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	(1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	8,818	8,598
	(2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	0	0
	(3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®	2,580	2,300
	(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g. First-Class Mail®)	4,231	4,639
c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4))		15,629	15,537
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	(3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g. First-Class Mail)	92	70
	(4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)	263	
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3) and (4))		355	70
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e)		15,984	15,607
g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3))		1,766	993
h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)		17,750	16,600
i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)		97.78	99.55

16. Publication of Statement of Ownership
☑ If the publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the FALL 2011 issue of this publication. ☐ Publication not required.

17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner: PUBLISHER — Date: 9/29/11

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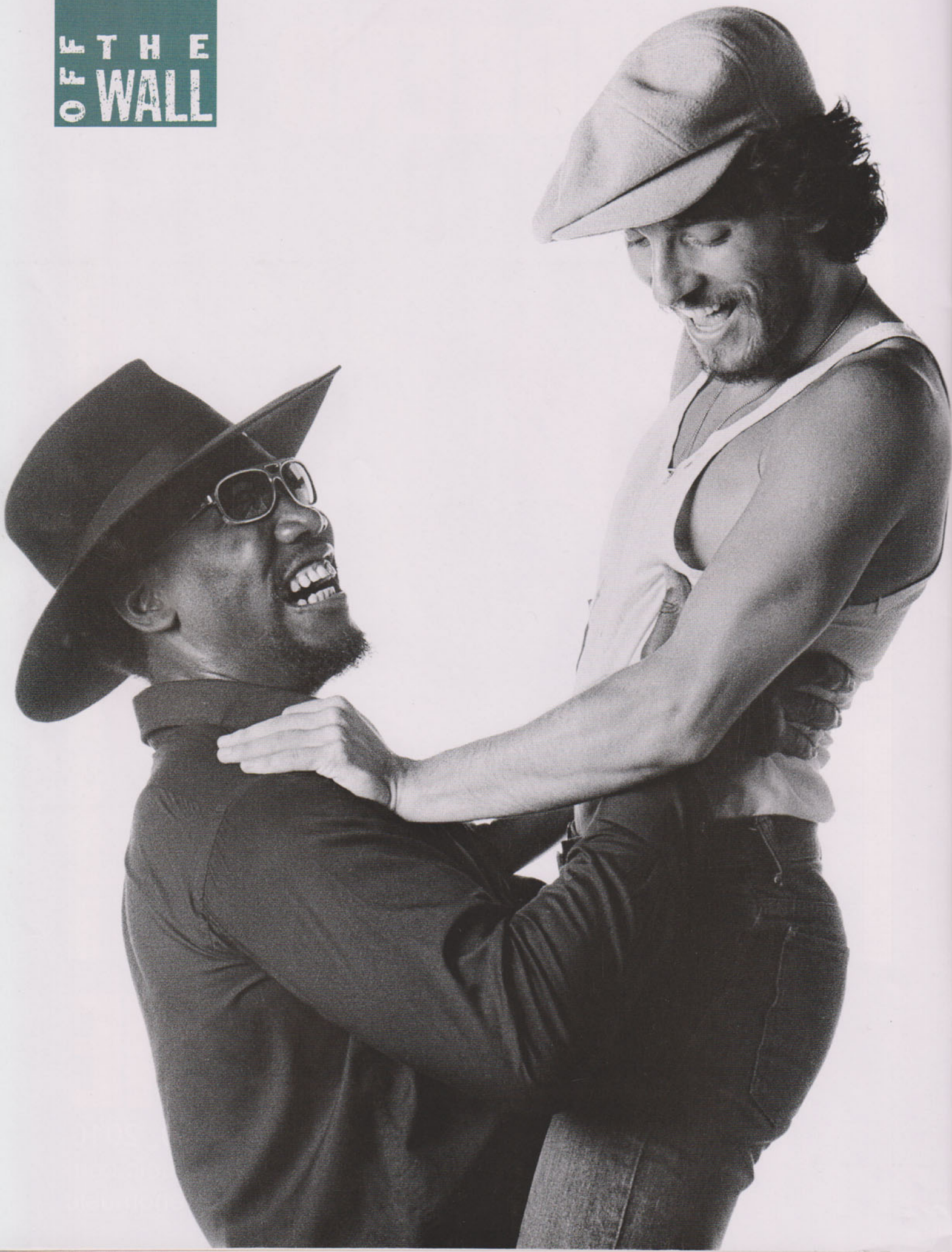
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